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HISTORICAL ESSAYS.



HISTORICAL ESSAYS

BY

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"*Gallorum levitas Germanos justificabit;*
Italiæ gravitas Gallos confusa necabit;
Succumbet Gallus, aquilæ victricia regna
Mundus adorabit, erit urbs vix præsule digna.
* * * * * * *
Papa cito moritur, Cæsar regnabit ubique,
Sub quo tunc vana cessabit gloria cleri."

PETER LANGTOFT, ii. 450

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PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

I FIND, a little to my surprise, that a fourth edition of this first series of essays is needed, while the second series still remains in the second edition and the third remains in the first. I should have thought that the last, containing writings at once more mature and on the whole on fresher subjects, would have been the favourite of the three. But I must take facts as I find them.

In looking again through these papers, written mostly from twenty to thirty years back, and of which the last edition is dated eleven years back, what chiefly comes home to me is how things have changed since they were first written. I believe I may take for granted that both myself and my readers have advanced; if I were to make fresh discourses on the same subject now, I might assume many things which I had then to insist on. We have now to deal with another map of Europe from that of 1860 or even that of 1866. I had then to speak of wrongs which have since been redressed, while I was but little called on to speak of wrongs which have since come to the front. To me at least it seems that whatever value the essays have is chiefly as a record of progress. I have therefore, in revising writings which have already become somewhat antiquated, dealt with them as in some sort things of the past. I have *corrected* some things, but I have *improved*

nothing. I have struck out or changed a few lines here and there, which I thought actually wrong or likely to mislead; I have not struck out or changed anything merely because I could now put it better or because it referred to a state of things which has now passed away. On one point at least the essays have become historical. In 1860 I had still to speak of the Austrian power as the enemy of Italy, the oppressor of Venetia. In 1871 I had been led into hopes which have certainly not been fulfilled, but the fulfilment of which was possible as late as 1875. I have left what I wrote at both times. But I may still be allowed to wonder why it is that a reference to the bondage of Milan and Venice stirred every heart in those days, while a reference to the bondage of Ragusa and the betrayal of Cattaro and Crivoscia stirs so few hearts now.

On the subject of one piece, that on "Saint Thomas of Canterbury and his Biographers," I have had, since 1875, to wage another controversy on behalf of truth and historic justice. But I have let the old essay still stand just as it was first written. In the essay on Presidential Government there is comparatively little in the main subject which would call for any change now, though at every step there is much to remind one of the time which has passed, and of the change in the world during the last three-and-twenty years. Everything brings home to us that we live in a time of the world's history which yields to few in the number and importance of the events which have happened within the memory of men who are yet hardly old. If I had the same call to revise my third series of Essays, though it deals largely with later events, I should

doubtless find that much has changed even since 1878. The intermediate volume stands on a different ground, except so far as even that might suggest new parallels in later times, which might throw light on the facts, though themselves unchangeable, which are dealt with in it.

16 St. Giles', Oxford,
March 23*rd*, 1886.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

The following essays have been chosen out of a much larger number which have appeared in various periodical works. The principle on which they were chosen was that of selecting papers which referred to comparatively modern times, or, at least, to the existing states and nations of Europe. It is by a sort of accident that a large number of the pieces chosen have thrown themselves into something like a continuous series bearing on the historical causes of the great events of the last and the present year. In revising the essays, I have commonly let passages referring to the state of European politics ten or fifteen years back stand as they were written at first, merely adding a note whenever a note seemed to be called for. I have done the same whenever change of circumstances or increase of knowledge on my own part has led me to change my views on any point. But whenever I could gain in accuracy of statement or in force or clearness of expression, I have freely changed, added to, or left out, what I wrote in the first instance. To many of the essays I have added a short notice of the circumstances under which they were written.

I have to thank Messrs. Longman for allowing me to reprint the essay which stands second in the series, the only one among several contributions of mine to the

Edinburgh Review which seemed to come within the scope of the present volume. I have also to thank the publishers and editors of the Fortnightly, British Quarterly, North British, and National Reviews for leave to reprint the articles which appeared in their pages. It is much to be regretted that two of the Reviews which I have just mentioned have now to be reckoned among things of the past.

If the present venture should prove successful, I hope that it may be followed by a further selection from among my smaller writings, whether from among essays of the same class as those now reprinted, but bearing on earlier periods of history, or from among smaller pieces on various subjects not always strictly historical.

SOMERLEAZE, WELLS,
August 9th, 1871.

HISTORICAL ESSAYS.

I.

THE MYTHICAL AND ROMANTIC ELEMENTS IN EARLY ENGLISH HISTORY.

I do not intend in the present Essay to enter into any full examination of the nature of mythical narratives, or systematically to compare those which we meet with in early English history with those which we meet with in the early history of other nations. The origin of mythical narratives in general, and the relation of the myths of one nation to those of others, is an important and fascinating subject, and one which has lately been zealously taken up by a special school of inquirers. The doctrine of the comparative mythologists traces the myths of at least all Aryan nations to a certain common stock of sayings, expressive of the chief phænomena of nature. These sayings, set forth in the simple poetical language of an early age, have gradually grown into narratives of the adventures of personal beings. Zeus, for instance, is the Sky, Apollo the Sun, and the legends of Zeus and Apollo resolve themselves into poetical descriptions of those processes of nature in which the sky and the sun are concerned. This view must not be confounded with that of an earlier school of mythologists, who saw in the Grecian legends a system of physical truths set forth under the veil of allegory. The comparative school admits of nothing like conscious allegory. In the view of its followers the physical truth grows into the mythical story by a process perfectly gradual and unconscious. The doctrine is new and fascinating, and, as put

forth by Professor Max Müller and by Mr. G. W. Cox, it is in the highest degree capable of poetical treatment. But I must confess that I can as yet accept it only in a modified form. I must make a distinction between legends of the Gods and legends of the Heroes—between myths which are *quasi*-theological and myths which are *quasi*-historical. I can fully believe that Zeus is the Sky and that Dêmêtêr is the Earth, and that the legends of Zeus and Dêmêtêr arose from poetical statements of physical phænomena relating to the sky and the earth. But I confess that I have some difficulty in accepting the doctrine that the mythical histories of Heraklês, of Meleagros, of Paris, of Achilleus, and of Odysseus, are all of them mythical ways of describing the daily course of the sun. The idea is most ingenious, and the way in which it is carried out is, in many of its details, not only ingenious, but highly beautiful. But I confess that I am as yet only half a believer. Perhaps I am under the influence of a dread that, if Achilleus and Odysseus are ruled to be the sun, later heroes of mythology and romance, Arthur and Hengest and Cerdic and the Great Karl himself, may some day be found out to be the sun also. The fear is natural on the part of one who does not scruple to confess that he sees a certain historical element alike in Hellenic and in Teutonic legend. Yet I am told that the fear is an unreasonable one, inasmuch as the two views are really not inconsistent. I am given to understand that Achilleus may be the sun, and yet that I may see, if I please, in Achilleus' conquest of Lesbos a fragment, however exaggerated and distorted, of the real primitive tradition of the Hellenic conquest of the land which that conquest turned into Aiolis. Nay, I believe it is allowed that, if the Charlemagne of romance should also turn out to be the sun, the position of the historical Emperor Karl will be in no way damaged by the discovery.

I mention all this only to show why I do not feel called on to enter into any scientific explanation of such mythical

stories as I have here to deal with. I leave them to inquirers of another class, and I shall be well pleased if I find that my line of inquiry, though wholly different, is held by them not to be necessarily inconsistent with their own. But when I say that I recognize a certain historical element in the myths, I wish especially to guard against a probable misconception. I have as little sympathy with the old pragmatizing or Euhemeristic school of mythological interpretation as the comparative mythologists have with the old physical school. The pragmatizers take a mythical story; they strip it by an arbitrary process of whatever seems impossible; they explain or allegorize miraculous details; and, having thus obtained something which possibly may have happened, they give it out as something which actually did happen. This system has been thoroughly rooted up by Mr. Grote. It will never do to take the tale of Troy, to leave out all intervention of the Gods, and to give out the remnant as a piece of real Grecian history. It will never do, as Thucydides did, to piece out whatever seems unlikely by possible, but perfectly arbitrary, conjectures of our own. And yet I cannot but think that Mr. Grote goes too far in censuring all attempts to extract a certain amount of historical truth from the Trojan legend, or from any other legend. I will explain my notions on this head a little more fully. But to do so, I must first explain the nature of what I understand by *romantic* as distinguished from *mythical* narratives.

I divide then the statements contained in our early English history, or in any other history which may be chosen for our illustrations, into four classes—*historical*, *romantic*, *traditional*, and *mythical*. Of these I look on the mythical statements as standing to the traditional in the same relation in which the romantic statements stand to the historical. I shall therefore first inquire into the relation of these last two classes to one another, and then, arguing from the known to the unknown, attempt to point out more briefly the light which these relations cast

on the obscurer relation between traditional and mythical statements.

By *historical* statements I mean those which we accept as undoubtedly true, as resting on contemporary or other sufficient evidence: say, that Eadward the Elder died in the year 925, and that Æthelstan his son was chosen King in his stead. Or perhaps the words "undoubtedly true" may be too strong; for we often meet with statements which we must set down as historical, which we nevertheless receive with a certain hesitation, as resting on a mere balance of evidence. Owing to the natural imperfection of all human testimony, owing to unavoidable errors, to men's different ways of looking at things, to the way in which statements are, sometimes wilfully, sometimes unconsciously, coloured by party spirit or other interested feelings—owing to all these causes, we often find contradictory statements of facts, between which we have to judge as we best can, but where there is nothing mythical or romantic about either version. Thus, in the whole career of Godwine and Harold, we have to pick our way between the opposite statements of friends and enemies. Both versions cannot be true; but the version which we reject is not myth or romance, but mistake or calumny, as may happen. The true statement is historical—the false one we may call *pseudo-historical*; it assumes the form of history, and it is put forth in the hope and belief that it will be accepted as true. Such misstatements are, in a later stage, often adorned with romantic details—such, for instance, as we shall presently find in the legend of the death of Godwine—but in their original state they are not romance, but history misconceived or misrepresented.

By *romantic* statements I understand stories about historical persons, which we set aside, sometimes as merely doubtful, sometimes as positively untrue, by other tests than those by which we distinguish historical from *pseudo*-historical statements. Around many famous men there gathers a mass of tales and anecdotes, the evidence for

which is insufficient. Sometimes all that we can say is that the evidence is insufficient. The story may be neither improbable in itself, nor inconsistent with the recorded actions and character of the person spoken of. Of this kind is a large proportion of the personal anecdotes handed down to us by Plutarch. They may have happened, but we cannot feel certain that they did happen. We know that anecdotes are often invented, and that they are often improved in the telling. We know that the fact of an anecdote being probable and characteristic is no proof of its historical truth. For clever anecdote-mongers always take care that their anecdotes shall be probable and characteristic. Many a living man has heard stories about himself, some of which are pure invention, some of which contain a kernel of truth, but which in both cases illustrate, if only by caricature, some real feature in his character. Stories of this sort, where a distinct play of fancy is at work, set us down within the borders of the land of romance. In *pseudo*-historical statements, the narrator is either himself deceived, or he intentionally seeks to deceive others; in purely romantic statements deception hardly comes in either way. The teller and the hearer have no set purpose to contradict historical truth; they are simply careless about historical truth. They tell an attractive story, heedless whether it be true or false; the tale may be coloured by the narrator's passions or opinions, but it is not a direct pleading on the side of those passions or opinions, as are the statements which I have called *pseudo*-historical. If the teller and the hearer have knowledge and tact enough, they will take care that the story, if not true, shall be at least characteristic. But in more careless hands no such propriety is aimed at. The tale may, in such a case, be utterly improbable from the beginning, or, though it may have been characteristic at starting, it may, in process of telling, get incrusted with circumstances which make it no longer even characteristic. Every detail is exaggerated, improved, or corrupted; and circumstances

are brought in from other stories about other people. In this last process we come across one of the most fertile sources of legendary matter.

There is a class of stories which seem to be the common property of mankind, and which may be said to go about the world with blanks for the names, dates, and places, ready to be filled up as occasion may serve. We meet with abundance of these stories both in undoubted mythology and in what professes to be history. Stories, for instance, of women falsely accusing men who have refused their favours, stories of kings' daughters betraying their country for love of invaders who in the end punish their treachery, turn up, with little more than the change of name, in all times and in all places. Now stories of this sort we instinctively doubt, even in their earliest form, and in every later form we unhesitatingly reject them. It comes indeed within the compass of belief, and even of probability, that such a story may have happened once. In some cases indeed we may be sure that one form of the story is historical, the later repetitions only being legendary; nay, it is within the compass of physical possibility that such a story may have happened several times. It is even possible, especially when a story occurs both in legend and in history, that the later story may be a conscious repetition of the earlier. Alexander *may*, as Mr. Grote believes, have dragged Batis at his chariot-wheels, in conscious imitation of the treatment of the body of Hektôr by Achilleus. But the chances are always strongly against any tale of the kind. Knowing, as we do, the way in which stories grow and wander about, we need the strongest contemporary evidence to make us believe any of them. Take, for instance, one of the best known of the class. There is nothing actually impossible in the story of a father being set to shoot an apple off his son's head. We should have no difficulty in believing the fact on sufficient evidence. But when we see the story turning up in various forms in various places, when in some instances it is evidently a mere tale, when in

no instance does it rest upon any convincing testimony, we set it down as simply one of the stories which make the round of the world. Another point must be mentioned, namely that, when we have two or more stories of this sort, there is no need to suppose that any one of them is borrowed from any other. So to argue is like deriving Greek from Sanscrit, or French from Italian. Those who told the story of Palnatoki could not have heard the story of William Tell, and it is not likely that those who told the story of William Tell had heard the story of Palnatoki. It is far more probable that both are portions of that general stock of romantic narrative which is the common property of mankind.

By romantic narratives then I understand stories about historical persons, which are neither historical nor *pseudo*-historical, neither real truth nor invention with a purpose, but mere plays of fancy, in which historical truth is simply disregarded. In most of them there is probably a kernel of truth; in some of them we can see what the kernel of truth is; but all the colouring, all the circumstances, everything which gives life to the story, are, at the best, doubtful, and are in many cases clearly fictitious. The story, at its best, cannot be proved to be true, and in many cases it can be proved to be false. Such a story may be laudatory, or it may be calumnious. In such a case we may feel sure that, in its first form, it was put forth by the friends or by the enemies of the person spoken of; but as the story grows, virtues are heightened, vices are blackened, new good actions and new crimes are attributed to the hero, by the mere process of mythopœic growth, without any regard to truth, but without any intentional departure from it. Truth and falsehood, as I have before said, are matters foreign to the state of mind both of the teller and of his hearers. Of this state of mind Mr. Grote gives a lucid explanation in the chapter on mythical narratives to which I have already referred. Stories of this sort, as long as they are acknowledged to be mere stories, may often be told and heard with real pleasure. The evil begins when

they are mistaken for history, as they constantly are, and that sometimes at a time surprisingly near to the period at which they are said to have happened. Our early English history, and all early history, is full of them. To show their true character is one of the highest duties of the historian; but none of his duties runs more distinctly counter to popular prejudice, there is none in the discharge of which the results of his labour are more distasteful to large classes of his readers. With most people our early history is a mere collection of legends. Ælfred is simply the King who forgot to turn the cakes, or, in another form, the King who invented trial by jury. Eadgar is the King who imposed a tribute of wolves' heads upon the Welsh, or the King who slew Æthelwald and married his widow. Dunstan is the monk who took the devil by the nose, or possibly the Archbishop who caused Ælfgifu to be put to a horrible death. In all these cases history is simply sacrificed to silly stories. The real actions of very remarkable men are utterly forgotten, because their names have got inseparably attached to legends which at best are doubtful, and which in most cases can be shown to be untrue. Yet many people cry out as if some wrong were done to them, as if the grounds of all human belief were shaken, when they are simply asked to accept history and to reject fable, to see which statements rest on evidence and which do not, and to believe or disbelieve according as such a test requires. People deliberately set themselves against the truth; sometimes because truth contradicts some prejudice, sometimes merely to escape the trouble of inquiry. But the case becomes worse when the prejudice to be fought against takes the form of some political or provincial point of honour. For instance, the character of the greatest of England's later Kings is blackened in popular estimation, because people will accept late legends and ballads rather than the undoubted history written down at the time. History sets before us William Wallace as *quidam latro publicus*, the savage devastator of England; it sets before us

Robert Bruce as a traitor in turn to every cause, as a pardoned rebel, who at last took to patriotism as his only chance to escape the punishment of a treacherous private murder. It sets before us the great Edward as simply asserting the acknowledged rights of more than three hundred years—rights as fully acknowledged by his Scottish vassals as by his English subjects.* It sets him before us as acting throughout with a justice and a disinterestedness to which his age, or any age, affords few parallels—as acting throughout in strict adherence to law and right, and, after repeated provocations, staining his conquest with the smallest amount of bloodshed on record. But it makes a prettier story to tell of the hairbreadth scapes of hunted patriots than to record the real actions of a wise and righteous King. The legend therefore turns out the history. Scotch people make it a point of provincial honour to reject the truth, and English people—more unpardonably still—reject it simply because the legend is thought to be prettier. To crown the whole thing, novelists not only substitute the legend for the history, but alter the history itself to make the tale more convenient still. I believe there is a Scotch story-book which makes the great Edward, and not his wretched son, fight the losing fight of Bannockburn, and I dare say there are people, both Scotch and English, who believe that it really was so.

This is the sort of difficulty against which simple historic truth has to struggle. In many cases it illustrates the proverb that there are none so deaf as those who will not hear.

* Nothing could be more strictly just than Edward's whole dealing in the affair of the disputed fief. His singular disinterestedness stands out most clearly in the refusal of the proposal to divide the kingdom made by Hastings and the elder Bruce. Nothing could have been more tempting than such a proposal to a suzerain whose clear interest it was to have three weak vassals rather than one powerful one. But Edward, as ever, stuck to his motto—*pactum serva;* he scorned all such considerations, and adjudged the whole fief to the lawful heir. If any one wishes to see the difference between an honest man and a rascal, let him compare the dealings of Edward with John of Balliol in the matter of Scotland, and the dealings of Philip of France with Edward in the matter of Aquitaine.

To those who are accustomed to look facts in the face, it is hard to understand the clinging to a story as a truth simply because the story is pretty. As an avowed fable, as a mere novel, it would be just as pretty to hear. A romance without a shadow of truth may be exquisitely beautiful as a story, and the most severe historian has no wish to interfere with any one enjoying his favourite legend on those terms. All that he asks is that truth should never be tampered with, when truth, and not artistic beauty, is the question at issue. Belief is purely a matter of evidence, not a matter of taste or of prejudice. But disbelief of a story as a matter of historic reality is consistent with the fullest appreciation of the artistic beauties of the tale which is pronounced to be historically false. The historic mind is never offended by either myth or romance as such, but only when people obstinately cling to them to the rejection of historic truth. Thus the legends of Ælfred are singularly beautiful; the legends of Dunstan are disgustingly absurd. We can, as a matter of taste, enjoy the one and despise the other, while, as a matter of historic truth, we hold both to be equally worthless. The legend of William Tell throws a halo over the marketplace of Altdorf, and the legend of Achilleus throws a halo over the plains of Ilios, which can be as fully entered into by those who distinguish between history and legend, as by those who make their prejudices the measure of their belief. In fact, the lovers of legendary lore lose nothing by accepting the historic standard. A new source of enjoyment is opened to them, and the old one is not taken away.

I will now take two well-known legends in early English history, and attempt to dissect them, and to trace their several elements to their respective sources. In both cases we shall find a certain kernel of truth round which a whole tissue of romance has been woven.

In the year 933 the Ætheling Eadwine, son of King Eadward the Elder, and brother of the reigning King

Æthelstan, was drowned at sea. This simple entry is all that we find in the English Chronicles, and there is nothing about the entry to make us suspect any sort of foul play. We are at once reminded of the similar fate of a later Ætheling, William the son of Henry the First; and there is nothing to make us think that the prince who was drowned in 933 came to his end in any other way than the prince who was drowned in 1120. Among later writers, Henry of Huntingdon, who so often preserves fragments of early tradition, records the drowning of Eadwine as a misfortune clouding the otherwise successful career of Æthelstan: "Adversâ percussus fortunâ fratrem suum Edwinum, magni vigoris juvenem et bonæ indolis, maris fluctibus flebiliter amisit." Not a hint is here given that Æthelstan had any hand in his death, but quite the contrary. But on turning to Simeon of Durham, who wrote in the twelfth century, but who copied a much earlier Northumbrian Chronicle, we are amazed to find a direct assertion that Eadwine was drowned by order of his brother: "Rex Æthelstanus jussit Eadwinum fratrem suum submergi in mare." We are amazed at such a charge brought against one of our noblest Kings, a prince with whose whole character such a crime seems specially inconsistent. Nothing stands out more conspicuously in the reign of "glorious Æthelstan" than the care which, himself childless and probably unmarried, he took of his numerous brothers and sisters, and the harmony in which he always appears to act with them. On the field of Brunanburh the royal brothers, Æthelstan and Eadmund, appear side by side, almost like the Kastôr and Polydeukês of Grecian legend. Can we believe such a tale of such a man? We might look at the story as a mere piece of slander, invented by the Northumbrian enemies of the West-Saxon conqueror. But it is far more likely that the story is a mere bit of romance, which the Northumbrian chronicler inserted in his annals—a very likely bit of romance to be preserved in a dry pragmatized form, but for the genuine romantic shape of which we must

look elsewhere. The garrulous pages of William of Malmesbury help us to the key. I will translate the tale as William gives it:—

"When King Eadward was dead, his son Ælfward, born of his lawful wife,* followed his father by a speedy death. Then, when the hopes of all were fixed upon Æthelstan, Ælfred alone, a man of great insolence, with his party, resisted secretly as much as he could, disdaining to be subject to a lord whom he had not chosen of his own will. But when he, as the King told the tale above,† was discovered, and had ended his life, there were some who accused Eadwine, the King's brother, of treachery—a horrid and foul crime to disturb brotherly affection by hostile suggestions. Eadwine, though calling on his brother's faith, both in person and by messengers, and even denying the charge on oath, was driven into banishment. The insinuations of some men had so far prevailed over a mind occupied by many cares, that, forgetting the ties of kindred, he drove out a youth whom even strangers might have pitied, and that with an unheard-of kind of cruelty, for he was compelled, alone with his armour-bearer, to embark in a boat, without oars or rowers, and moreover rotten with age. Fortune laboured for a long while to bring back the guiltless to the shore. But when at last, in the midst of the sea, the sails could not abide the fury of the wind, he, as a delicate youth, and weary of life in such a case, sought death by a sudden plunge into the water. His armour-bearer, with wiser mind, enduring to prolong his life, now evading the adverse waves, now rowing with his feet, brought the body of his master to land, namely, over the narrow sea from Dover to Witsand. Æthelstan, when his anger had cooled, was shocked at the deed in his calmer mood, and having undertaken a seven years' penance, avenged himself wrathfully on the accuser of his brother. He was the King's cupbearer, and had therefore opportunities of effectually pressing any of his schemes. Therefore, once, when on a solemn day he was handing wine to the King, slipping with one foot, he recovered himself with the other; then, seizing the occasion, he uttered a word fatal to himself—'So brother helps brother.' When the King heard that, he commanded the traitor to be beheaded, oftentimes speaking aloud of the help which he should have had from his brother, if he had lived, and bitterly lamenting his death."

Such is William of Malmesbury's tale, on which he himself thus comments:—

"This story of the death of his brother, although it seems probable, I affirm

* This qualification alludes to the legend, which William had just before told, which represents Æthelstan as the natural son of Eadward by a shepherd's daughter. This again is a mere legend, which, with its accompaniment of dreams and marvels, doubtless made a very pretty story in some ballad.

† Namely, in a real or spurious charter of Æthelstan which William had quoted a little time before, and in which Æthelstan tells the tale in his own person. According to this story, Ælfred was sent to Rome to deny his conspiracy on oath before the Pope. He swore, of course falsely, fell down before the altar of Saint Peter's, and died on the third day.

with less confidence, because he showed a wonderful and affectionate care towards his other brothers, whom, when their father had left them as mere children, he brought up while young with every kindness, and when grown-up made them partners in his kingdom. Of his sisters, I have already said to what greatness he promoted those among them whom his father had left unmarried and untochered."

The readers of Livy will remember the story of the stratagems of Sextus Tarquinius at Gabii, a tale made out of two stories which are also found in Herodotus. The trick by which Sextus gains admission into Gabii comes from the same source as the trick by which Zôpyros gains admission into Babylon. The policy recommended to Sextus by his father's symbolical action is the same as the policy recommended to Periandros of Corinth by the like symbolical action of Thrasyboulos of Milêtos. Our present story of Eadwine is a compound story of the same class. It is made up of several current tales, which have had their blanks filled up with the names of Æthelstan, Eadwine, and the cupbearer, while any other names would have done just as well. A number of floating tales have gathered themselves, like barnacles on a plank, round the simple fact that Eadwine was drowned. The treacherous servant who falsely accuses his lord's wife, or son, or brother, is one of the stock characters of story-tellers in all time and places. He is always found out and punished when too late.

"Likewise he made the master-cook
In boiling lead to stand,
And made the simple scullion-boy
The heir of all his land."

This was the ending of a nursery-tale* which delighted and horrified my own childhood, and the master-cook and Æthelstan's cupbearer are only different forms of a single legendary sinner. But we may get more into detail than this. Stories of people exposed in boats, and being carried safely to some shore or other, are exceedingly common. To speak of no others, one is introduced into legendary English history in the century before Æthelstan. Lothe-

* It may be found in Percy's Reliques.

brok, a Dane of royal descent, is driven by a storm to the coast of East-Anglia with only his hawk on his wrist. He is there murdered by Biorn, the huntsman of Saint Eadmund, King of the East-Angles. Eadmund exposes the murderer in an open boat like his victim. Biorn is carried to Denmark, as Lothebrok was to England, and there, of course telling the story his own way, he excites the sons of Lothebrok to vengeance against his own master. He thus leads to the Danish conquest of East-Anglia, and to the martyrdom of Eadmund. It required a little invention to piece this story on to the fact that Eadwine was drowned; but this difficulty was got over by the introduction of the armour-bearer. The latter part of the tale comes over again in the Norman legend of Earl Godwine, which also contains details somewhat similar to those of the death of Ælfred. I will translate the tale as it is told in its fulness by Roger of Wendover, or those whom he copied :—

"In the year of grace 1054, Eadward, King of the English, kept the Paschal festival at Winchester, where, as the said King was sitting at the table, as his cupbearer was carrying to the table a royal beaker full of wine, he struck one foot against the floor of the house, but recovering himself with the other foot, he escaped falling. When Earl Godwine saw this as he was sitting, according to custom, by the King at dinner, he said, 'This brother brought help to his brother.' On this the King ironically answered him, 'My brother might now help me, if it had not been for the treachery of Godwine.' Then Godwine, who had betrayed the King's brother, being much distressed at the King's answer, replied: 'I know, O King,' said he—'I know that you suspect me of the death of your brother Ælfred; but may God, who is true and righteous, not let this morsel of bread which I hold pass my throat without choking me, if your brother ever underwent death or hurt of his body through me or by my device!' When he had said this, the King blessed the morsel, which Godwine put in his mouth, and, conscious of his guilt, was choked and died. When the King saw him dead and pale, 'Drag out,' said he, 'this dog, and bury him in the highway, for he is unworthy to have Christian burial!' When his sons, who were present, saw that, they dragged out their father from the table, and buried him in the Old Minster of that city, the King knowing nothing at all about it."

Now the whole Norman account of Godwine is in itself one of the best specimens of the growth of legend, the particular course taken by invention being in this case dictated by political enmity. This whole romance of the death of

Godwine, which William of Malmesbury gives in an intermediate shape, has gathered round the simple fact that the Earl fell down in a fit while at dinner with the King, and died four days after. But I am now concerned with it only as showing that the story of "brother helps brother" was a current one, ready to be fitted into any place which it would at all suit. Roger, who gives it in the legend of Godwine, does not bring it into the legend of Æthelstan, and William, who gives it in the legend of Æthelstan, does not give it in the legend of Godwine. The seven years' penance of Æthelstan also seems borrowed from the seven years' penance said, with better likelihood of truth, to have been imposed by Dunstan on Eadgar for the seduction of Wulfthryth.

We thus see what the elements of romance really are which have gathered round a very simple historical fact. I may add that chronology alone upsets the legend. The legend connects Eadwine's death with an opposition to Æthelstan's election to the crown. But Æthelstan was chosen King in 925, while Eadwine was not drowned till 933. A seven years' penance again, dating from this last year, would reach to the end of Æthelstan's reign, and would take in his most important actions.

For my own part I hold, not only that the details of the exposure of Eadwine and of the punishment of the cupbearer are altogether unhistorical—which I suppose few people will deny—but that there is no evidence at all to connect Æthelstan in any way with the death of his brother. But if any one chooses to accept the Northumbrian statement as historical, all that I have said will equally apply. The legendary details will have grown in exactly the same way round an historical kernel, just like the legendary details of the death of Godwine.

The second story which I have chosen as an illustration of the romantic element in what passes for our early history is one which I imagine to be more commonly known than that

of the death of Eadwine, namely the legend of Eadgar and his wife Ælfthryth, commonly Latinized into Ælfrida. This I cannot do better than introduce with the comments made on it by Lord Macaulay in the preface to the "Lays of Ancient Rome:"—

"'History,' says Hume, with the utmost gravity, 'has preserved some instances of Edgar's amours, from which, as from a specimen, we may form a conjecture of the rest.' He then tells very agreeably the stories of Elfleda and Elfrida—two stories which have a most suspicious air of romance, and which greatly resemble, in their general character, some of the legends of early Rome. He cites, as his authority for these two tales, the Chronicle of William of Malmesbury, who lived in the time of King Stephen. The great majority of readers suppose that the device by which Elfleda was substituted for her young mistress, the artifice by which Athelwold obtained the hand of Elfrida, the detection of that artifice, the hunting-party, and the vengeance of the amorous King, are things about which there is no more doubt than about the execution of Anne Boleyn, or the slitting of Sir John Coventry's nose. But when we turn to William of Malmesbury, we find that Hume, in his eagerness to relate these pleasant fables, has overlooked one very important circumstance. William does indeed tell both the stories; but he gives distinct notice that he does not warrant their truth, and that they rest on no better authority than that of ballads. Such is the way in which these two well-known tales have been handed down. They originally appeared in a poetical form. They found their way from ballads into an old chronicle. The ballads perished, the chronicle remained. A great historian, some centuries after the ballads had been altogether forgotten, consulted the chronicle. He was struck by the lively colouring of these ancient fictions; he transferred them to his pages; and thus we find inserted, as unquestionable facts, in a narrative which is likely to last as long as the English tongue, the inventions of some minstrel whose works were probably never committed to writing, whose name is buried in oblivion, and whose dialect has become obsolete."

A professed student of early English history may be a little amused at finding the work of William of Malmesbury called a "chronicle," and at finding David Hume spoken of as "a great historian." But, low as I rate the confused and rambling narrative of William, he at least stands out here in honourable contrast to Hume.* The monk of Malmesbury had some notion of the difference between truth and false-

* [I now rank William of Malmesbury higher than I did. His narrative is "confused and rambling;" his neglect of chronology makes him most provoking to one who consults him; but no one more commonly gives us two sides of a story, and no contemporary writer makes, as may be seen in the extract already given, a nearer approach to historical criticism.]

hood, between history and legend; the Scotch philosopher, it seems, had absolutely none. But the process by which legend gets transmuted into apparent history could not have been better described than it is by Lord Macaulay, and he could not have found better instances to illustrate his position. But it is needful to go a little further into the matter than Lord Macaulay has done. The story, as told by William of Malmesbury, is not the only form of the legend, and I do not think that it is the oldest form. It bears signs of being improved from another still extant version. It is improved at once by the doing-away of one or two manifest contradictions, and by the introduction of one or two incidents which are not found in the earlier version, and which, if they increase the criminal horrors of the story, certainly add to its poetical effect. But let us first see what the history is. In the English Chronicles we read, under the year 965:*—

"This year Eadgar King took Ælfthryth to him to Queen. She was Ordgar Ealdorman's daughter."

Florence of Worcester, the best of our Latin writers, the discreet and careful translator and harmonist of the English Chronicles, tells us one more circumstance about Ælfthryth. She was the widow of Æthelwald, Ealdorman of the East-Angles:—

"Rex Anglorum pacificus Eadgarus Ordgari Ducis Domnaniæ filiam, Ælfthrytham nomine, post mortem viri sui Æthelwaldi, gloriosi Ducis Orientalium Anglorum, in matrimonium accepit."

Henry of Huntingdon, who so often preserves older traditions, is silent.

Thus far, and it is as far as certain history goes, there is not the slightest shadow of crime or scandal thrown upon the matter. The King, himself a widower, marries the daughter of one of his chief nobles, the widow of another. We know indeed that the character of neither husband nor wife was altogether spotless. Eadgar, the lover of the nun† Wulf-

* Florence makes it 964. This difference of a year, owing to imperfect calculations, is very common.

† It is not perfectly clear whether Wulfthryth was a professed nun, but, at any rate, the sanctity of the cloister was invaded.

thryth, was not absolutely perfect in his relations with women; and Ælfthryth afterwards incurred a suspicion, amounting almost to certainty, of being concerned in the death of her stepson Eadward.* But, as far as her marriage goes, there is nothing at all in the recorded history to make us look on the transaction as being otherwise than regular and honourable. Yet the mere fact of scandalous stories arising, if it does not exactly prove anything, at least awakens our suspicions. And in this case, there is something like internal evidence for some small part of the legend. Let us then examine its different versions in detail, beginning with the familiar story as told by William of Malmesbury.

Eadgar, according to this legend, hears of the beauty of Ordgar's daughter, and thinks of marrying her. But he first sends his confidential favourite Æthelwald to see whether report spoke truly of her. Æthelwald goes to her father's house, falls in love himself, and marries her, persuading the King that she is unworthy of a royal alliance. After a while Eadgar hears of the deception, and proposes a visit to Æthelwald. Æthelwald, in his alarm, tells his wife how he obtained her, and begs her to disguise her beauty from the King. Instead of so doing she adorns herself to the utmost of her power. Eadgar becomes enamoured, and kills Æthelwald at a hunting-party. He turns round to Æthelwald's natural son, who happens to be present, and asks how he likes such a quarry. The youth answers that whatever pleases the King pleases him. Eadgar takes him into his special favour, and marries the widow Ælfthryth.

* "Give a dog a bad name and hang him." When Ælfthryth's character was damaged in one way, it was easy to make stories to her discredit in other ways. There is a wild fable in the *Historia Eliensis*, about her and Brihtnoth, Abbot of Ely, in which she is first described as a witch, and then made to play the part of Zuleikha to the Abbot's Joseph. Of course such changes are made as were needed to adapt the story to the case of a widow—for the tale is placed after the death of Eadgar—instead of that of a married woman.

But the story, as told by Geoffrey Gaimar, and in the Chronicle known as that of Bromton, is widely different. It is not only told with much greater detail, but it contradicts the other version in some of the essential parts of the story. Down to the marriage of Æthelwald and Ælfthryth there is no substantial difference. But at that point the stories part company. Eadgar's visit to Æthelwald does not take place till after Ælfthryth has borne a son, whom the King holds at the font, and to whom he gives his own name, but without having seen his mother. Æthelwald purposely asks the King to become godfather to the child, in order that he might thereby contract a spiritual affinity with the mother. Æthelwald is thus put more at his ease as to any possible designs on the part of the King, either on the virtue of Ælfthryth or on his own life. Then comes the story of the visit, essentially the same as in William's version, only it is told, by Bromton at least, with much greater detail, and with a fervid description of the growth of Eadgar's passion. Eadgar then considers how he may get rid of Æthelwald by craft. He holds a meeting of his "parliament" at Salisbury, and, as the Danes had lately invaded Yorkshire, it is determined to send Æthelwald to the defence of that country. He is met on the road in Wherwell Forest by armed men—whether sent by Eadgar or not, neither Geoffrey nor Bromton ventures to decide—who kill him. Eadgar marries the widow, contrary to the canon law, which forbade marriage with the parent of a godchild. For this he is rebuked by Saint Dunstan, who pronounces the marriage to be mere adultery, and requires Eadgar to separate from his wife. So great however is his love for her that he can never bring himself to do so.

Let us compare these two stories. The latter, I may remark, though improbable, is just possible, and I suspect that it contains one little germ of truth which explains how the whole story arose. The main improbability lies in the utter misconception of Æthelwald's position, which however

would not necessarily involve the falsehood of the rest of the story. Æthelwald was the son of Æthelstan, the reigning Ealdorman of the East-Angles, and he was associated with his father in that dignity, one short only of royalty. In the story he is represented as a needy adventurer, glad to marry the daughter of the rich Ordgar, and when married, he lives in Devonshire, with or near his father-in-law.* The deception and the visit are of course just possible, though we may safely set them aside as mere romance. But the birth of the child to whom the King is godfather, the essential point of difference between this version and the other, is much more likely to contain a germ of truth. That the marriage of Eadgar and Ælfthryth was in some way uncanonical, and brought husband and wife under Dunstan's rebuke, is perfectly probable, and it is not the sort of thing which a mere minstrel would invent. On the other hand, it might be thought that we have here some confusion between Ælfthryth and Wulfthryth, and that the legend-maker was thinking of the penance imposed on Eadgar by Dunstan for the sacrilegious abduction of a consecrated virgin. But I think that in this breach of canonical rule we shall find the real germ of truth in the story. The way in which the tale goes on is very remarkable. The narrator clearly has the story of David and Uriah in his head, and to make the parallel complete, he ought to kill Æthelwald by the sword of the Danes. But he stops short in a most lame and impotent way, killing him on the road to his new government, and not venturing to say whether those who killed him were the King's agents or not. It strikes me that a piece of genuine history or tradition stood in the way of the original romance. Let us suppose that Æthelwald really was murdered by some

* Neither Geoffrey Gaimar nor William of Malmesbury makes any allusion to Æthelwald being Ealdorman of the East-Angles. Bromton makes him at once the King's secretary and Ealdorman of the East-Angles, and makes him talk of himself as a poor man to whom a rich marriage was desirable. Of course the original legend knew nothing of his dignity, but Bromton put in the title of Ealdorman without thinking of the contradiction.

unknown persons, and that Eadgar married the widow in breach of some canonical restriction,* and we have the germ round which the whole story grew. By a supposition of this kind we get at the origin of the legend, which otherwise is puzzling. If there were nothing remarkable about the marriage, whence all this talk about it? If Æthelwald died a violent death, and if the marriage of his widow was uncanonical, though there would be no proof at all of any criminality on the part of Eadgar and Ælfthryth beyond the mere breach of the canon law, there would be quite enough to set slanderous tongues on imagining moral aggravations of their formal offence.

If this be so, we have, just as in the case of Eadwine, a germ of truth round which a certain portion of fabulous matter has gathered. It is almost necessary to suppose something of the kind to account for the existence of the legend at all. In the case of Eadwine, the manner of his death, as recorded in the Chronicles, suggested the tale of his exposure; but in the simple record of the marriage of Eadgar and Ælfthryth there is nothing to suggest any one feature of the tale. I think then that we may assume a violent death of Æthelwald and an uncanonical remarriage of his widow as almost certain. To this germ of truth the first romantic narrative added the story of the deception of Eadgar by Æthelwald and the visit of the King to Ælfthryth. The next stage took a much greater liberty with the facts. The story now probably got into other hands. The tale in Bromton has an ecclesiastical tone about it: it turns on a breach of canonical rule, and one object of it is to set forth the holy courage of Dunstan in rebuking a royal offender. As a mere story, it is but a lame one: Æthelwald

* It would be simpler and more natural to suppose a marriage entered into with indecent haste after the death of the first husband. But there is reason to believe that two or three years passed between the death of Æthelwald and the marriage of his widow. Up to 962 Æthelwald signs charters in company with his father Æthelstan; in that year he ceases to do so, and his brother Æthelwine takes his place. It is therefore almost certain that Æthelwald died in 962.

is killed somehow, but the tale-teller does not know exactly how: he suspects the King, but he does not venture directly to accuse him. This is a state of mind which in an historian is often highly praiseworthy, but it is not one suited to produce any very effective romantic narrative. The tale next fell into the hands of some one who did not care about the credit of Saint Dunstan, and who was not thinking of David and Uriah. It manifestly was far more effective to make Eadgar kill Æthelwald with his own hand. There are many stories of people being killed at hunting-parties, and indeed a hunting-party is brought in among the details given by Bromton, though nobody is killed at it. The murder at the hunting-party was thus suggested. But this was not all. The story of Kambysês and Praixaspês in Herodotus stood ready to be worked in. I do not mean either that the English minstrel had read Herodotus, or that he knew anything about Praixaspês from any other source. I only mean that a tale, forming part of the common fund of romantic tales, which the informants of Herodotus had ages before shaped into one form, was now shaped into one slightly different. In Herodotus the tyrant shoots the son, and calls on the father to admire his archery. In the legend of Eadgar father and son necessarily change places. Now that the tale had reached the dignity of an unmistakable murder, the mere breach of canonical order was left out, or became quite secondary. But the new version borrowed one important feature from the old. The son of Æthelwald, whom Eadgar afterwards loved so dearly, was surely, in the first form of this second version, the young Eadgar, the son of Ælfthryth, the King's own godson and stepson. Lastly, William of Malmesbury, or those whom he immediately followed, saw the absurdity of bringing in a son of Ælfthryth's of an age to speak and act. They therefore made the youth, not a son of Ælfthryth, but a bastard of Æthelwald by some unknown mother. The story of the birth of young Eadgar, and of the spiritual affinity between his mother and the King, was

now simply in the way, and, not being very capable of poetical treatment, it was left out altogether. In short, while the first version of the legend still retains a certain kernel of truth, the second is simply fabulous throughout. New imaginary incidents have been introduced, and the little truth which remained has been turned out to make way for them.

One or two features may be noticed in both versions which illustrate the feelings of the time, or possibly point to a traditional conception of the personal character of Eadgar. Æthelwald's delight in his fancied security, when he has succeeded in placing the bar of spiritual affinity between the King and his wife, points to an age, or to a character, which looked on the breach of a petty canonical restriction as a greater crime than adultery or murder. Till that point is made safe, Æthelwald feels no security that Eadgar will not seduce his wife or murder him for her sake. But he thinks that he will most likely have a scruple about either seducing or marrying the mother of his godson, On the other hand, in neither version does Eadgar, enamoured as he is—and Bromton's version helps us to all the details of an extravagant passion—make any attempt to corrupt the virtue of Ælfthryth while she is the wife of Æthelwald. His first thought seems to be, not to make Ælfthryth his mistress, but to get rid of Æthelwald and marry his widow. Eadgar is, in short, set before us as a character something like Henry the Eighth, as one who feels more scruple at adultery than he feels at murder, and who is expected to feel more scruple at an uncanonical marriage than he feels at adultery. That is to say, a breach of Divine law is more serious in his eyes than a breach of natural justice, and a breach of human law is more serious than a breach of Divine law. We have no reason to say that such was the real character of Eadgar, but it was a caricature very likely to be drawn by the enemies of a prince who was so zealous in enforcing the observance of canonical restrictions. It would have been a triumph indeed to represent the great champion of clerical celibacy

as a murderer and adulterer, after the pattern of David. But it was a still greater triumph to describe him, either in fiction or in real history, as himself breaking a canonical restriction of the same class as that which he was foremost in imposing on others.

Such are the two legends which I have chosen out of many others to illustrate the nature, origin, and growth of *romantic* fiction. Each of them has its special value for my purpose. In the story of Eadwine we see how the fiction was suggested by the real history as we find it recorded. In the story of Ælfthryth, we see how the germ of truth, which the recorded history has failed to preserve, is to be found by internal evidence in the details of the legend itself. The story of Ælfthryth also, being happily preserved in two quite distinct versions, helps us to trace out in a more distinct way how tales of this sort grew, how each stage brought in fresh imaginary details, and still further concealed the truth which lay at the kernel. It is also a good illustration of the great rule for testing two contradictory stories. If, supposing A to be true, we cannot account for the origin of B, while, supposing B to be true, we cannot account for the origin of A, we have found an argument almost approaching to certainty in favour of the truth of A. This rule applies equally to real and to fictitious narratives. When it is applied to two statements, each claiming to be historical, it determines A to be the true account, and B to be *pseudo*-historical. When it is applied to two romantic statements, it does not indeed prove that A is historically true, but it proves that it possesses a kind of relative truth. It shows that it is an older form of the fiction than B, and one therefore likely to depart less widely from historical truth.*

Having thus, as I hope, done enough to set forth and illustrate the nature of what I call the *romantic* element in

[1] [I have struck out a paragraph here in which I found that it was my own geography that was in fault. 1886.]

our early history, I will now argue backward from the better known to the less known, and endeavour to set forth the nature of what I distinguish from it as the *mythical* element. In a mythical narrative, as it appears to me, we may fairly expect to find the same sort of elements of truth which we find in the romantic narrative, though we are not able to test the mythical narratives in the same convincing way. A mythical narrative, as I hold, stands to genuine tradition in the same relation in which a romantic narrative stands to recorded history. If out of such a mythical narrative we succeed in disentangling the element of genuine tradition, we reach something which I hold to be essentially of the same nature as recorded history, though infinitely inferior in degree.

By mythical stories then, as distinguished from romantic stories, I understand tales in which, as being placed before the beginnings of recorded history, we cannot fix the respective amounts of truth and falsehood from direct evidence. In examining such stories as those with which we have just been dealing, we are in a position to affirm some facts, and to deny others, with as full confidence as we can affirm and deny anything which does not come within the range of our own personal knowledge. Much may be left doubtful, which we do not venture positively either to assert or to deny; but the state of historical certainty, the possibility of confident assertion and confident denial, is matter of constant occurrence. That Eadgar married Æthelwald's widow we may positively assert; that Eadgar slew Æthelwald with his own hand we may positively deny. That Æthelwald met with a violent death, that Eadgar was godfather to a son of Æthelwald and Ælfthryth, are assertions which are highly probable, all but certain, but still assertions which we do not make with perfect confidence. We know the value of the evidence, internal and external, for every part of the story. But when we come to a mythical tale, a tale whose scene is laid in a time of which we have no recorded history, we cannot test its component elements in the same

way. On the mere strength of the tale itself, we may often positively deny, but we can never positively affirm. The furthest point that we can reach is that the internal evidence for some statements renders them highly probable; but we cannot get beyond such probability, unless the mythical statement is confirmed by external evidence of some sort or other. For it must be remembered that external evidence is often to be had, even for times before written history; I mean evidence of the antiquarian class in its various forms, buildings, barrows, sepulchral remains, philological evidence derived from language and local nomenclature. All this is just as much direct evidence as the statements of chronicles and charters,* and, compared with evidence of that class, it has some advantages and some disadvantages. Written evidence may, after all, not be trustworthy; the author may have been misinformed, or he may have wilfully perverted the truth; or again, he may be both honest and well-informed, but we may misinterpret his testimony. In the case of antiquarian evidence this latter source of error is greatly increased, while the former source is altogether taken away. We are more liable to misunderstand the evidence supplied by a sepulchral barrow than we are to misunderstand the evidence supplied by a written document; but then the written document may err or may lie, the sepulchral barrow can neither err nor lie. In inquiries of this kind we must be constantly on our guard against our own misinterpretations, but we need stand in no fear of error or deception on the part of our informants. Or again, what is an age of recorded history for one nation is an age before recorded history for another, so that casual allusions in writers of other nations may also be taken as conclusive external evidence. The two or three references in Greek writers to the mythical period of Roman history, the two or three

* Coins and inscriptions are strictly written documents, differing from chronicles and charters only in their material. In fact, they go some way to combine the advantages of both species of evidence.

references in Byzantine writers to the mythical period of English history, so far as they fall in with the mythical tales, form corroborative evidence for those tales. But, without corroborative evidence of one or other of these kinds, no statement during mythical times can get beyond probability. The distinct, probable, and uncontradicted statement of a contemporary chronicle we accept as certain truth; but a statement, however distinct, probable and uncontradicted, relating to times before recorded history, we do not accept as more than probable, unless it be confirmed by some evidence of another kind.

The point then at which I part company with Mr. Grote is this. Mr. Grote has done excellent service by utterly upsetting the old pragmatizing way of dealing with mythical stories. No one can any longer venture, as so many have done from Thucydides onwards, to take a poetical tale, to strip it of its impossible elements, to turn it by an arbitrary process into something which may have happened, and then, without any further evidence, to give it out as something which did happen. That Achilleus killed Hektôr by the personal help of Athênê we all agree in disbelieving; but to leave Athênê out, and to give it forth as an historical fact that Achilleus killed Hektôr without the help of Athênê, is utterly unphilosophical. One statement is impossible; the other is perfectly possible; but there is no more evidence for one than for the other. Thus far I heartily go along with Mr. Grote; but I cannot go on with him to say that every attempt to extract truth, or even probability, from mythical stories is only time thrown away. I believe that by other processes, by the processes at which I have already hinted, a good deal may be recovered which is highly probable, something which is all but certain. I am led to this belief by an argument from analogy. I argue from the known to the unknown; I employ our knowledge of the way in which we know that romantic stories were formed, to help us to the way in which it is probable that the mythical stories were formed.

We have seen then that the makers of romantic legends did not purely and wholly invent. There is a kernel of truth at the bottom of their stories. A real action of a real person is distorted, exaggerated, incrusted with all kinds of fictitious details, details sometimes transferred to a wrong person, or to a wrong time or place; but we see that a real action of a real person did form the groundwork, after all. The Charlemagne of romance departs so utterly from the Karl of history that we seem to be dealing with two different persons. The actions of Charlemagne are, for the most part, purely imaginary, and, when they are grounded on any real actions of Karl, those actions are so perverted as to seem hardly the same. The character of Charlemagne is not the character of the historical Karl; the person of Charlemagne is made up by taking Karl as the groundwork, and throwing in all kinds of elements, earlier and later. His very nationality is mistaken; the greatest of Germans has become the national hero of a people who in his age had no national speech or national being, and whose land he knew only as a province of his German kingdom. Still even in the legend of Charlemagne there is a groundwork of real history. It preserves a memory of the time when a single Emperor reigned over all Western Europe. Here is a fact which we should hardly have guessed from later history, but which the legend of Charlemagne preserves no less than the history of Karl. Again, some of the utterly fabulous exploits of Charlemagne, though they have no groundwork in the history of Karl, have a groundwork in the history of other people. The ally of Haroun, the political lover of Eirênê, never led armies against Jerusalem or Constantinople. But later heroes did; and the fact that the legends carry Charlemagne to Constantinople and Jerusalem would, of itself, almost be enough to prove the reality of some expeditions to those cities. When a crusade was the type of heroism, when Charlemagne was the type of a hero, it was assumed that so great a hero must have gone on a crusade, and a crusade was accordingly invented for him. But such

an invention could have been made only in an age to which real crusades were familiar; it is therefore in itself a witness to the historical truth of some crusades, though not of the particular crusade spoken of. Again, though doubtless many of the minor actors in the legend are purely fictitious, some are not. Roland is such a pure hero of romance that we might easily fancy that he never existed. But two lines of Eginhard preserve to us the fact that Roland was a real man, and that his famous legendary death is a very easy perversion of his historical death. He did die in Pyrenæan warfare, though in warfare waged not against Saracens, but against Gascons.* Now it seems to me that legends of this sort, which we can test by real history, give us a key to the amount of truth likely to be found in those legends which we cannot test in the same way. Arguing from the known to the unknown, I should expect to find about the same amount of truth in the legend of the Trojan war which I find in the legend of Charlemagne. The legend of Charlemagne, amidst infinite perversions, preserves a certain groundwork of real history. I should expect to find in the legend of Agamemnôn a similar groundwork of real history. There is of course the all-important difference, that we can test the one story, and that we cannot test the other, by the certain evidence of contemporary documents. This gives us certainty in one case, while we cannot get beyond high probability in the other. But, pursuing the analogy, let us see what amount of probability there is in the Trojan story. Later Grecian history would never lead us to believe that there had once been a single dynasty reigning, if not as sovereigns, at least as suzerains, over a large portion of insular and peninsular Greece. So later mediæval history would never lead us to believe that there had once been a Latin or Teutonic Emperor whose

* Eginhard, Vita Karoli. c. 9: "In quo prœlio Eggihardus regiæ mensæ præpositus, Anselmus comes palatii, et *Hruodlandus Brittannici limitis præfectus*, cum aliis compluribus interficiuntur." This is, I believe, the whole of the authentic history of Roland.

dominions stretched from the Eider to the Ebro. But we know that the Carolingian legend is thus far confirmed by history; there is therefore no *à priori* objection to the analogous features of the Pelopid legend. The truth is that the idea of such an extensive dominion would not have occurred to a later romancer, unless some real history or tradition had suggested it to him. So again, without some such groundwork of history or tradition, no one would have fixed upon Mykênê, a place utterly insignificant in later history, as the capital of this extensive empire. The romances have transferred the capital of Karl from Aachen to Paris; had it really been Paris, no one would have transferred it to Aachen. To have quartered the Bretwalda of Hellas at Argos or Sparta would have been the natural course of perversion; to quarter him at Mykênê could have been done only under the influence of a genuine tradition. And that tradition again is confirmed by those striking antiquarian remains which show by indisputable evidence that Mykênê really was in early times a far more important city than it appears in later history. Whether Agamemnôn be a real man or not, the combination of internal and external evidence leads us to set down the Pelopid dynasty at Mykênê as an established fact. Again, one can hardly doubt that the war of Troy is a mythical version of some part or other of the warfare which gradually Hellenized the north-west coast of Asia. The warfare of Agamemnôn in the Troad may be as imaginary as the warfare of Karl at Jerusalem, because, if Agamemnôn was a great traditional name, legend-makers would, at a time when Grecian imagination was filled by schemes of conquest in Asia, be as sure to carry him thither as Karl was sure to be carried to Jerusalem. But a false crusade implies a real crusade, and mythical warfare in the Troad points to that real warfare there which we know, from the results of the case, must have taken place. The Greek chief who conquered Lesbos may, or may not, have been named Achilleus; but some Greek chief must have conquered Lesbos; and, with the

example of a real Roland before our eyes, we may be inclined to say that the chances are stronger that he was named Achilleus than that he was not. I could mention many other portions of the Trojan story which seem to me to have such a measure of evidence, internal or external, as to enable us to set them down as, if not certain, at least probable in a very high degree. But I hope to discuss the matter more at length in another work; at present I have only referred to the main outline of one of the most familiar of mythical narratives in order to show the sort of amount and kind of truth which we are likely to find in any mythical narrative.

The truth, as it appears to me, is that the difference between romantic and mythical narratives, as I defined them at starting, is simply a difference in the degree of our knowledge of them, not a difference in the nature of the tales themselves. We can test the one class in detail, and we cannot so test the other; but each class seems really to consist of exactly the same elements. In both alike there is an element of truth and an element of imagination. A romantic narrative we can commonly compare with an historical narrative of the same event, and we can thereby disentangle the several elements of which it is made up. So, in dealing with a mythical narrative, if we can, by any sort of evidence, external or internal, distinguish the element of genuine tradition from the poetical or imaginative element, we are doing what is virtually the same thing. We are too often apt to confound these two elements in a mythical story, and to forget that tradition is really a means of information essentially of the same kind as history. Each alike intends or professes to hand down a true statement of facts; only one works with a very imperfect instrument, the other with a much more perfect one. History, in short, is written tradition, and tradition is oral history. History and tradition, as having the same object, the preservation of a true account of past times, form one class, as opposed to mere poetical or romantic tales to which the

truth or falsehood of statements is indifferent. The difference between such tales and either history or tradition is a difference of kind, while the difference between history and tradition themselves is only a difference of degree. Tradition has the same objects as history, but it is a much ruder instrument for attaining those objects. It is far more open to corruption, both accidental and wilful; it is far more liable to be mixed up with mythical or romantic additions. In many cases it exists only in combination with such additions, and it has to be disentangled from them how it can, while history commonly exists in an independent and parallel shape. It is therefore by no means so easy to get at genuine tradition as to get at genuine history, and, when we have got at it, it is by no means worthy of the same undoubting acceptance. In short, its inferiority in degree as compared with history is almost infinite; all that I assert is the absolute identity in kind of the two sources of information. The oral statement of an eyewitness is as trustworthy as his written statement; the only difference is that the oral statement is much more likely to be corrupted by the various mouths through which it afterwards passes. But such a statement, however much corrupted, still differs in kind from the mere romantic tale. The distinction was observed long ago by Herodotus, who remarks on the widely different versions as to certain points in the half-mythical history of Peloponnêsos, as they were told in the songs of the poets and as they were told in the native traditions of Sparta.*

To get then at genuine tradition is a difficult matter; and the genuine tradition, when it is got at, is only a very imperfect form of history. Still I maintain that it is an imperfect form of history, and that, as such, it is entitled to a certain measure of respect. But to entitle it to such respect it must be genuine tradition. It must not be a romantic legend cut down into prose. It must not be

* Herod. vi. 52: *Λακεδαιμόνιοι γὰρ, ὁμολογέοντες οὐδενὶ ποιητῇ, λέγουσι. κ. τ. λ.*

later inference or invention or imitation. For instance, I look on the War of Thebes, the War of Troy, the Dorian Migration, as all pieces of genuine tradition, as far as concerns the essence of the story, however mythical every detail may be. The first of the three is cast so far back into mythical darkness that we cannot accept a single detail, so far back that even for the main story there is only the faintest shadow of probability. In the War of Troy we can discern the historical event of which the story is a legendary representation ; and we here and there meet with details which are capable of such an amount of corroboration of one kind or another as to clothe them with the highest degree of probability. The Dorian Migration is all but historical, and the most sceptical historians admit the main story as true. Doubtless in all three the mythical or romantic element is very strong; but then that element lives on to a much later stage of Grecian history, and is by no means wanting even in the narrative of the Persian War.* On the other hand, tales about Kekrops coming from Egypt are not traditions, or even myths, but inferences from a theory. The legend of Aineias coming into Italy is, as far as we can see, a bit of genuine tradition ; that is, there seems no ground for supposing it to be mere inference or invention. But it must be an inaccurate tradition, because it contradicts another tradition which has strong corroborative evidence.† But the catalogue of Alban kings in Livy is pure invention. It is made up to cover over a chronological difficulty which showed itself when men began to affix dates to the legends. The elder story made Aineias the father or grandfather of Romulus. But when the fall of Troy got a date, and when the foundation

* See Cox's Tale of the Great Persian War, p. 112.

† I refer to the passages in Homer which distinctly speak of an Aineiad dynasty as reigning in the Troad, and which have been often quoted to show that a dynasty descended, or claiming to be descended, from Aineias, was actually reigning there in the time of the poet. To me this inference seems as certain as any mere inference can be. See Iliad, xx. 307. Cf. Hymn to Aphroditê, 197, 198.

of Rome got a date, it was seen that the founder of Rome could not, according to the received chronology, be the son or grandson of a fugitive from Troy. A series of names was therefore invented to fill up the gap. So the whole series of Attic legends is full of mere invention of this kind. So again, while the Trojan origin of Rome is apparently a genuine tradition, the Trojan origin of Briton and Frank is mere imitative invention. A Trojan descent was the right thing for a distinguished nation, and it was invented accordingly, just as pedigree-mongers nowadays invent pedigrees, Norman, Welsh, or Scotch, according to taste. Human nature and human vanity are the same in all times and places, and rubbish of this sort, however ancient, must be carefully distinguished from those genuine traditions which are an inferior form of history.

Again, I must here repeat a remark with which I started, namely, that I draw a much wider distinction than the Comparative Mythologists seem disposed to allow between theological and historical myths. Legends of the gods and legends of the heroes undoubtedly run into one another in such a way that it is not always easy to draw an accurate line between them. Still the two things are essentially distinct. Tales about Zeus and Woden, and tales about Achilleus and Hengest, seem to me to be altogether different in kind. The former class are theological, physical, what we please, anything but historical. The latter have at least the form of history, and it is worth inquiring in each case whether they contain any measure of its substance. The doctrines of all religions must largely take the form of facts; but purely theological facts, true or false, do not come within the range of history, and they are seldom capable of historical proof or disproof. That Zeus deposed his father Kronos, that Loki brought about the death of Balder, are propositions altogether beyond the range of history; their examination belongs to another science. But that Achilleus conquered Lesbos and Hypoplakian Thebes, that Hengest and Horsa founded the first English

kingdom in Britain, are propositions essentially of the same class as the propositions that Henry the Fifth conquered at Agincourt and that Edward the First massacred the Welsh bards. Of these last propositions we know one to be true and the other to be false. The propositions about Achilleus and Hengest we cannot so undoubtingly accept or reject; but the difference is not in the nature of the propositions themselves, but in the difference of our means of testing them. But the strictly theological propositions of either a true or a false religion we deal with in a different way. In the words of Scripture, we walk in the one case by faith (or its opposite), in the other case by sight.

I have but little space left to illustrate, in the purely mythical history of England, the principles of mythical interpretation which I have been trying to lay down. But take, for instance, the story of Hengest. As there is an historical Eadgar and a romantic Eadgar, so is there a traditional Hengest and a mythical Hengest. The personal existence of Hengest is doubtful; that is to say, it is doubtful whether the founder of the Kentish kingdom bore the name of Hengest.* The name has a mythical air; but as men have been called Wolf and Bear and Lion, a man may also have been called Horse. The name may be merely a mythical expression of the national standard, or a chieftain may really have been called after the national standard. Hengest again is undoubtedly a mythical hero, and the different versions of his origin and exploits cannot be made to agree. But it is possible, on the one hand, that a real conqueror of Kent may have become a hero of Teutonic minstrelsy, and may thus have gathered a mythical reputation round him; it is possible, on the other hand, that the conquest of Kent may have been mythically attributed to a favourite hero of legend. All this is utterly doubtful. But beyond this we get matter which we can much more positively accept and much more positively

[* I now see no reason to doubt the real existence of Hengest.]

deny. That about the time when Hengest is said to have lived, certain Teutonic conquerors began—most undoubtedly not the first Teutonic incursion into Britain, possibly not the first Teutonic settlement in Britain—but the first pure and self-existent Teutonic kingdom, the first Teutonic settlement after the Roman power was withdrawn, the first Teutonic settlement which involved, whether by extirpation or assimilation, the utter driving out of the earlier British and Roman elements—all this is not indeed directly proved by contemporary evidence, but it is asserted by an evidently genuine tradition, and it is borne out by all the later phænomena of English history. The Chronicles give us a narrative which is, in the main, perfectly credible, and most of which is evidently genuine tradition—tradition, it may be, assisted by some rude artificial helps to memory, such as have existed among many nations. The invitation of Vortigern looks as if it had come in from a Welsh source; but even here there is nothing incredible in the main tale itself; it only wants evidence. A British prince, like a Roman Emperor or an Abbasside Caliph, may have taken barbarian mercenaries into his pay; they may have turned against him, and may have invited fresh hordes of their brethren. But the details of this story, as given in one version of the Chronicles, are certainly mythical, and though the main story itself is possible, yet I suspect that the whole tale is a bit of Welsh romance which has found its way into the English Chronicles. But what follows, namely the meagre details of the conquest of Kent, is surely genuine tradition, and it is, allowing perhaps for an artificial computation of years, as trustworthy as any tradition can be. The Chronicles confine the conquest of Hengest to Kent, and they give us nothing but what is credible and probable. But in Nennius we begin to get mythical details which are unknown in the earlier version; Hengest's daughter,* for

* Is it possible, however, that even in this wild story an element of truth may lurk? In most tales the stranger marries the daughter of the native prince; here the native prince marries the daughter of the stranger. Does

instance, is now introduced, though her name of Rowena* is as yet unheard of. When we come to Geoffrey of Monmouth we get a whole tissue of pure myth, working in all kinds of wonders and stereotyped fables, till there arises a mythical Hengest as different from the traditional Hengest as the romantic Charlemagne is from the historical Karl.

Yet it is worth notice that, even among these tales, a bit of probable history peeps out. Nennius, like our own Chronicles, confines Hengest himself to Kent; but he makes two chieftains of his house, Octha and Ebissa, conquer and settle far to the north, on the confines of the Picts. We find nothing of this in the Chronicles, nor is there any entry at all about the North of England till, in 547, the accession of Ida the Angle to the Northumbrian crown is recorded. It is the first recorded Northumbrian event, but it is recorded in a way which shows that Ida, though the founder of the subsequent Northumbrian kingdom, was not the first Teutonic settler in that part of Britain. This earlier settlement of Octha and Ebissa just fills up the gap, and fills it up in the most unsuspicious way. It appears again in a somewhat different, but perfectly probable, form in William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon. They make Ida the first King of the Northumbrians, the settlement having been originally made by chiefs who took no higher title than that of Ealdormen. And if we can suppose a distinctively Saxon settlement in the north, before the establishment of Ida and his Angles, one or two points in the later history of Northumberland would be cleared up. Hengest indeed and his followers are not called Saxons, but Jutes; but I suspect that the ethnical connexion between Jutes and Saxons was closer than that between either and the Angles.

not this typify the probable fact that the English settlers, to a great extent at least, brought their women with them, in short, that our settlement in Britain was a strictly national migration? [The researches of Dr. Rolleston have set this matter beyond doubt. He has seen our Teutonic grandmothers.] [1872]

* It is amusing to find this purely fictitious name, which is nowhere found in real history, assumed by novelists and newspaper-writers as the typical name of an Englishwoman before the Norman Conquest.

The mythical history of England, that namely which we have no direct means of testing, lasts down to the conversion of the English to Christianity, about one hundred and fifty years after the time assigned to Hengest. But I can call it mythical only in the sense that it does not, as far as we know, rest on contemporary written evidence. Some names and dates may be doubtful, but I have no doubt that the main story represents a genuine and trustworthy tradition, perhaps, as I before hinted, assisted by some means of artificial memory. The more the details of the story are examined by antiquarian and philological tests, the more clearly does the general truth of the narrative come out. No doubt we have here the great advantage that we are dealing with the very last stage of a mythical period, when the first twilight of proper history is beginning to dawn. We are dealing with a period analogous, not to the War of Thebes, or even to the War of Troy, but to the Dorian Migration and the Wars of Messênê. When I find that the boundary of my own parish and my own property coincides, after thirteen hundred years, with the boundary assigned by two independent inquirers,* following two distinct lines of investigation, to the conquests of the West-Saxon Ceawlin in 577, I cannot say that I find myself inclined to the over-sceptical way of judging of these matters.

Once more, in all these inquiries our one object is truth—truth to be sought after at all hazards, at whatever sacrifice of preconceived opinions, whether they take the form of personal theories or of national prejudices. Historical criticism requires us to give up many beliefs to which we are naturally attached, but it in no way interferes with our artistic enjoyment of romantic stories, and it gives us, above all things, the one jewel—truth. And happily, in early English history at least, the substitution of history for legend almost always tends to exalt instead of to depreciate the ancient heroes of our land. It is something to find in real history that Ælfred

* Dr. Guest and the late Rev. Francis Warre.

was as great and good, and that most of his successors were greater and better than they appear in legend. It is something to find, as we do find, in the pages of real history, that Æthelstan was not a fratricide; that Eadgar was not one of the basest of murderers; that Godwine was a patriot and not a traitor; that Harold was no usurper, but the noblest of Englishmen, the true choice of every English heart; it is something to find elements of greatness and even of goodness in the awful portrait of his mighty rival; to see in Henry of Anjou and in Thomas of Canterbury men both of whom had a zeal for God, though it was for God alone to say whose zeal was according to knowledge;* to see in Simon of Montfort no selfish and crafty rebel, but the combined saint and hero and statesman to whom we owe our freedom; to see in the great Edward no reckless invader of other men's rights, but the wise and just and merciful assertor of his own. For truths like these it is worth while to surrender a few pleasant fables; but on the other hand, we must beware lest sound criticism degenerate into indiscriminate scepticism. We have seen, I think, that the probability is in favour of any mythical narrative being founded on a groundwork of truth. To distinguish truth and falsehood amid such darkness needs great caution, and a constant check upon the temptation of fancy. But I believe that the task is not impossible, and that antiquarian and philological research opens to us the means of testing many a tale which at first sight appears to be hopelessly beyond our power of examining, and of showing that much which appears to be the merest fiction, may really contain no small element of genuine truth.

* I borrow the expression of Thomas's friend and biographer, Herbert of Bosham: "Certo enim certius quod uterque Dei habuerit æmulationem, unus pro populo, alter vero pro clero; utrius tamen eorum fuerit cum scientiâ zelus, non hominis qui cito fallitur, sed scientiarum Domini qui in fine declarabit judicium." Vita S. Thomæ, iii. 18 (p. 109, Giles). The whole passage, from which I have made only a short extract, is very remarkable.

II.

THE CONTINUITY OF ENGLISH HISTORY.*

A COMPARISON between the histories of England, France, and Germany, as regards their political developement, would be a subject well worth working out in detail. Each country started with much that was common to all three, while the separate course of each has been wholly different. The distinctive character of English history is its continuity. No broad gap separates the present from the past. If there is any point at which a line between the present and the past is to be drawn, it is at all events not to be drawn at the point where a superficial glance might perhaps induce us to draw it, at the Norman invasion in 1066. At first sight that event might seem to separate us from all before it in a way to which there is no analogy in the history either of our own or of kindred lands. Neither France nor Germany ever saw any event to be compared to the Norman Conquest. Neither of them has ever received a permanent dynasty of foreign kings; neither has seen its lands divided among the soldiers of a foreign army, and its native sons shut out from every position of wealth or dignity. England, alone of the three, has undergone a real and permanent foreign conquest. One might have expected that the greatest of all possible historical chasms would have divided the ages before and the ages after such an event. Yet in truth modern England has practically far more to do with the England of the

* [This was originally a review of Dr. Vaughan's work called Revolutions in English History, and the former part of the article consisted mainly of minute criticism on the book. But the latter part was of more general interest, and seemed worth preserving.]

West-Saxon kings than modern France or Germany has to do with the Gaul and Germany of Charles the Great, or even of much more recent times. The England of the age before the Norman Conquest is indeed, in all external respects, widely removed from us. But the England of the age immediately succeeding the Norman Conquest is something more widely removed still. The age when Englishmen dwelt in their own land as a conquered race, when England was counted for little more than an accession of power to the Duke of Rouen in his struggle with the King of Paris, is an age than which we can conceive none more alien to every feeling and circumstance of our own. When then did the England in which we still live and move have its beginning? Where are we to draw the broad line, if any line is to be drawn, between the present and the past? We answer in the great creative and destructive age of Europe and of civilized Asia—the thirteenth century. The England of Richard Cœur-de-Lion is an England which is past for ever; but the England of Edward the First is essentially the still living England in which we have our own being. Up to the thirteenth century our history is the domain of antiquaries; from that point it becomes the domain of lawyers. A law of King Ælfred's Witenagemót is a valuable link in the chain of our political progress, but it could not have been alleged as any legal authority by the accusers of Strafford or the defenders of the Seven Bishops. A statute of Edward the First is quite another matter. Unless it can be shown to have been repealed by some later statute, it is just as good to this day as a statute of Queen Victoria. In the earlier period we may indeed trace the rudiments of our laws, our language, our political institutions; but from the thirteenth century onwards we see the things themselves, in that very essence which we all agree in wishing to retain, though successive generations have wrought improvement in many points of detail and may have left many others capable of further improvement still. Let us illustrate our meaning

by the greatest of all examples. Since the first Teutonic settlers landed on her shores, England has never known full and complete submission to the will of a single man. Some assembly, Witenagemót, Great Council, or Parliament, there has always been, capable of checking the caprices of tyrants and of speaking, with more or less of right, in the name of the nation. From Hengest to Victoria England has always had what we may fairly call a parliamentary constitution. Normans, Tudors, and Stewarts might suspend or weaken it, but they could not wholly sweep it away. Our Old-English Witenagemóts, our Norman Great Councils, are matters of antiquarian research, whose exact constitution it puzzles our best antiquaries fully to explain. But from the thirteenth century onwards we have a veritable Parliament, essentially as we see it before our own eyes. In the course of the fourteenth century every fundamental constitutional principle became fully recognized. The best worthies of the seventeenth century struggled, not for the establishment of anything new, but for the preservation of what even then was already old. It is on the Great Charter that we still rest the foundation of all our rights. And no later parliamentary reformer has ever wrought or proposed so vast a change as when Simon of Montfort, by a single writ, conferred their parliamentary being upon the cities and boroughs of England.

This continuity of English history from the very beginning is a point which cannot be too strongly insisted on, but it is its special continuity from the thirteenth century onwards which forms the most instructive part of the comparison between English history and the history of Germany and France. At the time of the Norman Conquest, the many small Teutonic kingdoms in Britain had grown into the one Teutonic kingdom of England, rich in her barbaric greatness and barbaric freedom, with the germs, but as yet only the germs, of every institution which we most dearly prize. At the close of the thirteenth century we see the England with which we are still familiar, young indeed

and tender, but still possessing more than the germs, the very things themselves. She has already King, Lords, and Commons; she has a King, mighty indeed and honoured, but who may neither ordain laws nor impose taxes against the will of his people. She has Lords with high hereditary powers, but Lords who are still only the foremost rank of the people, whose children sink into the general mass of Englishmen, and into whose order any Englishman may be raised. She has a Commons still diffident in the exercise of new-born rights; but a Commons whose constitution and whose powers we have altered only by gradual changes of detail; a Commons which, if they sometimes shrank from hard questions of state, were at least resolved that no man should take their money without their leave. The courts of justice, the great offices of state, the chief features of local administration, have assumed, or are rapidly assuming, the form whose essential character they still retain. The struggle with Papal Rome has already begun; doctrines and ceremonies indeed remain as yet unchallenged, but statute after statute is passed to restrain the abuses and exactions of the ever hateful Roman court. The great middle class of England is rapidly forming; a middle class not, as elsewhere, confined to a few great cities, but spread, in the form of a lesser gentry and a wealthy yeomanry, over the whole face of the land. Villainage still exists, but both law and custom are paving the way for that gradual and silent extinction of it, which, without any formal abolition of the legal *status*, left, three centuries later, not a legal villain among us. With this exception, there was in theory equal law for all classes, and imperfectly as the theory may have been carried out, it was at least far less imperfectly than in any other kingdom. Our language was fast taking its present shape; English, in the main intelligible at the present day, was the speech of the mass of the people, and it was soon to drive out French from the halls of princes and nobles. England, at the end of the century, is, for the first time

since the Conquest, ruled by a prince bearing a purely English name, and following a purely English policy. Edward the First was no doubt as despotic as he could be or dared to be; so was every prince of those days who could not practise the superhuman righteousness of Saint Lewis. But he ruled over a people who knew how to keep even his despotism within bounds. The legislator of England, the conqueror of Wales and Scotland, seems truly like an old Bretwalda or West-Saxon Basileus sitting once more on the throne of Cerdic and of Ælfred. The modern English nation is now fully formed; it stands ready for those struggles for French dominion in the two following centuries, which, utterly unjust and fruitless as they were, still proved indirectly the confirmation of our liberties at home, and which for ever fixed the national character for good and for evil.

Let us here sketch out a comparison between the history and institutions of England and those of France and Germany. As we before said, our modern Parliament is traced up in an unbroken line to the early Great Council, and to the still earlier Witenagemót. The later institution, widely different as it is from the earlier, has not been substituted for the earlier, but has grown out of it. It would be ludicrous to look for any such continuity between the Diet of ambassadors which meets at Frankfurt* and the assemblies which met to obey Henry the Third and to depose Henry the Fourth. And how stands the case in France? France has tried constitutional government in all its shapes; in its old Teutonic, in its mediæval, and in all its modern forms—Kings with one Chamber and Kings with two, Republics without Presidents and Republics with, Conventions, Directories, Consulates, and Empires. All of these have been separate experiments; all have failed; there is no historical continuity between any of them. Charles the Great gathered his Great Council

* [That this Diet has since given way to something wholly different is only a further instance of the distinction.] [1872]

around him year by year; his successors in the Eastern *Francia*, the Kings of the Teutonic Kingdom, went on doing so long afterwards. But in Gaul, in Western *Francia*, after it fell away from the common centre, no such assembly could be gathered together. The kingdom split into fragments; every province did what was right in its own eyes; Aquitaine and Toulouse had neither fear nor love enough for their nominal King to contribute any members to a council of his summoning. Philip the Fair, for his own convenience, summoned the States-General. But the States-General were no historical continuation of the old Frankish assemblies; they were a new institution of his own, devised, it may be, in imitation of the English Parliament or of the Spanish Cortes. From that time the French States-General ran a brilliant and a fitful course. Very different indeed were they from the homely Parliaments of England. Our stout knights and citizens were altogether guiltless of political theories. They had no longing after great and comprehensive measures. But if they saw any practical abuses in the land, the King could get no money out of them till he set matters right again. If they saw a bad law, they demanded its alteration: if they saw a wicked minister, they demanded his dismissal. It is this sort of bit-by-bit reform, going on for six hundred years, which has saved us alike from magnificent theories and from massacres in the cause of humanity. Both were as familiar in France in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as ever they were in the last years of the eighteenth. The demands of the States-General, and of what we may call the liberal party in France generally, throughout those two centuries, are as wide in their extent, and as neatly expressed, as any modern constitution from 1791 to 1848. But while the English Parliament, meeting year after year, made almost every year some small addition or other to the mass of our liberties, the States-General, meeting only now and then, effected nothing lasting, and gradually sank into as

complete disuse as the old Frankish Assemblies. By the time of the revolution of 1789, their constitution and mode of proceeding had become matters of antiquarian curiosity. Of later attempts, National Assemblies, National Conventions, Chambers of Deputies,* we need not speak. They have risen and they have fallen, while the House of Lords and the House of Commons have gone on undisturbed.

And as with the parliamentary constitution, so it is with all our lesser institutions. There is hardly a title or office, from a Lord-Chancellor to a Head-borough, which does not reach back at least to Edward the First, while not a few reach back to Ælfred and Hengest. What would Philip the Fair have understood by a Prefect of a Department or by a Minister of Public Instruction? But Edward the First corresponded with the Sheriffs of his counties, with the Mayor and Aldermen of his capital, exactly like our present Sovereign. Elsewhere the advisers of the Crown bear some title which at once bespeaks their modern origin. Here in England they are sometimes the shadows, sometimes the realities, of some great mediæval office. On the other side of the Channel, the Minister bears his portfolio, here the Secretary bears his seal. Look again at our local divisions. Save for the formation of the Welsh counties, the map of England under Victoria differs but little from the map of England under William the Conqueror, we might almost say from the map of England under Eadward the Elder. Of the Old-English kingdoms, several still survive as counties, some of them with their boundaries absolutely unchanged. Nearly all our shires date at least from the tenth century, many of them date from the very beginning of the English Conquest.† But a map of France or Germany sixty or

* [Here again events which have happened since the essay was written supply further instances of this position.] [1872]

† [I have explained the distinction in this respect between the shires of Mercia and of Wessex, in the History of the Norman Conquest, vol. i. p. 561, ed. 2.] [1872]

seventy* years old is already well nigh useless; one showing those countries as they stood under Frederick Barbarossa or Lewis the Seventh looks like the map of another region. Normandy, Burgundy, Guienne, are gone —cut up into departments which we suppose only their own Prefects can undertake to remember. In the other of the two old Frankish realms, where are the old Five Nations? where are the comparatively modern Seven Electors? Franconia, Saxony, Lorraine, Bavaria, and Swabia, have either vanished from the map, or they have so changed their shapes and boundaries that no man would know them for the same. In everything, in laws, in institutions, in local divisions, France and Germany have been alike lands of change, England is pre-eminently the land of permanence.

But, though the characteristics of English History are thus throughout combined permanence and progress, yet we cannot deny that there are occasional periods of at least apparent falling back. We say apparent, because it may be doubted whether there has been any period which has proved to be such in the long run. One such period we have already seen; the period of Norman oppression comes between the days of England's earlier and later freedom. Yet even during that gloomy twelfth century that silent union of the two nations was going on without which England could never have beheld the glorious events of the thirteenth. At a later period, the fifteenth century is a time of distinct degeneracy. Some good laws were made, some good precedents were established; but on the whole, the Parliaments of the fifteenth century were less liberal and independent bodies than those of the fourteenth. One of them formally legalized religious persecution; another stands alone in English history in passing a counter-reform bill. The county franchise was restricted to those freeholders whose possessions reached the amount of forty shillings yearly.

* [One is now tempted to say "six or seven."] [1872]

Considering the value of money at the time, this must have been a measure of extraordinary exclusiveness, such as the most conservative of statesmen would not have dreamed of for some generations past. The later Parliaments of this century exhibit the most utter subserviency to the powers which are uppermost for the moment; we feel that we are fast drawing near to the Elysian epoch of Mr. Froude. Again, the war with France has sunk into a mere struggle for an unjust dominion, and is succeeded by fierce and purposeless civil wars at home. The personal and dynastic struggles of the fifteenth century excite a sort of feeling of disgust when compared with the great struggles of principle either of the thirteenth century or of the seventeenth. Yet there is a bright side even to the fifteenth century. That age, looked at alone, may be thought to have gone back, but in the long run, it has, like other ages, contributed to our general progress. The developement of the popular power in the seventeenth century required the previous breaking-down of the old feudal nobility. The general harmony between the two Houses of Parliament, from their very beginning, has been something wonderful; but it is evident that, till the old nobles were got out of the way, the House of Commons could never become the real ruling body. And the particular way in which they were got rid of hindered any open breach between the mass of the people and a peerage which was really the first rank among themselves. The Norman nobility were not overthrown by any popular movement; they were cut down by each other's swords at Towton and Barnet, or were reserved to fall beneath the axe of Henry. The Tudor despotism, like the Norman despotism, served to shelter and preserve the elements of liberty through a period of transition. And, if the Parliaments of the later Plantagenet æra were less independent than their predecessors, we see, both then and in the Tudor age, abundant evidence that the importance of Parliament was becoming more and more fully recognized. The very

act which narrowed the elective franchise shows that the elective franchise was a thing valued and sought after, that it was no longer felt as a burthen, as it often was in earlier times. Late in the fifteenth century, as the Paston Letters show, the position of a borough member had risen sufficiently to be an object of ambition to men of birth and landed property. In the Tudor age, we come to direct government interference at elections, and to the creation of insignificant boroughs on purpose to secure members in the interest of the Crown. Violent and corrupt as were these stretches of power, they still show the advancing importance of the body about whose composition so much care was taken. And palpably unjust as were the French wars of this age, they were more distinctly national wars, waged for the national glory. Edward the Third, as a French prince, claimed the crown of France; his son reigned at Bordeaux as Prince of Aquitaine. But Henry the Fifth, as a King of England, obtained a treaty which made the crown of France an appendage to the crown of England. Doubtless England, by grasping at the French crown, lost her own Aquitanian coronet, but that very loss rendered her still more insular and national, and it is clear that all traces of the old Norman feeling must have utterly died out in the breasts of the men who strove to make France a province of England.

In the ecclesiastical aspect of the fifteenth century we see the same mixture of advance and retrogression. The Church of the fifteenth century was scandalously corrupt; both doctrinal and practical abuses had reached their highest pitch. The prelates of that day were, at all events in their professional aspect, men very inferior to their predecessors. They had sunk into mere secular statesmen, members of noble families who preferred the crosier to the sword, and whose ecclesiastical advancement was owing to their birth or their worldly services. The fifteenth century supplies us with none of the saints, heroes, and patriots of the Church, none of the Anselms and Beckets, the Langtons and

Grossetestes, of former times. Chichele was one of the best prelates of that day, and he certainly owed his promotion to merit in his own calling. But even Chichele was not ashamed to promote an unjust war, in order to draw off the attention of the King and the nation from the overgrown wealth of the Church. But, on the other hand, even this degradation of the Church is not without its good side also. The Church is no longer antagonistic to the State; the clergy have become citizens like other men.

We have thus tried to trace the outward sequence of cause and effect through a considerable portion of history. This outward sequence is all that we can profess to trace out. We cannot submit the phænomena of English history, its course at home or its points of difference from that of other nations, to any grand scientific law. If we are asked for the causes of the contrast between the steady course of freedom in England and its fitful rises and falls in France, we have no universal formula of explanation. We can only say that the causes are many and various; and some of those which we should assign are perhaps rather of an old-fashioned kind. We confess that we are not up to the last lights of the age; we have not graduated in the school of Mr. Buckle. We still retain our faith in the existence and the free-will both of God and of man. National character, geographical position, earlier historical events, have had much to do with the difference; but we believe that the personal character of individual men, and the happy thought, or happy accident, of some particular enactment has often had quite as much to do with it as any of them. No one single cause has more effectually and more beneficially influenced our whole political developement than the law or custom which gives to the children of a peer no higher legal *status* than that of simple commoners. This alone has allowed us to retain the institution of a hereditary peerage, while it has delivered us from the curse of a nobility of the continental sort, forming a distinct caste from the rest of the people. Yet no one can tell the date,

the author, or the cause, of this all-important rule. Again, we do not believe that men like William the Conqueror and Edward the First were mere walking automata. Their personal will, their personal genius, did influence men and things, let philosophers say what they please. Of these several classes of causes we have only space to point out a few of the most important. None, we think, has had greater influence than the fact that we Englishmen live in an island, and have always moved in a sort of world of our own. This, combined with the exterminating character of the first Teutonic settlements, made England, in the days of its earliest independence, a more purely Teutonic country than even Germany itself. And even the Norman Conquest, which seemed to destroy the old Teutonic life of the nation, in truth only strengthened it. To the Norman Conquest, more than to any other event, we owe the new birth of freedom two centuries later. It gave the finishing stroke to that process of union which had been going on ever since the days of Ecgberht. England now for ever became one kingdom. For a moment she became the prey of strangers; but a variety of happy circumstances soon tended to change her conquerors into her children. The gigantic genius and iron will of the Conqueror himself enabled him to establish a power in the Crown which had no parallel in Europe save at Constantinople and at Cordova. Then came the accession of the Angevins, which was almost equivalent to a second Conquest. The French domains of Henry the Second were so vast that he was essentially a French sovereign. William was a Norman reigning in England; Englishmen were conquered, but England was great. Henry was a Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, perhaps a would-be King of France, who ruled England as a dependency beyond the sea. Posts of honour were so far from being held by men of Old-English blood, that they were but sparingly held even by the descendants of the first Norman settlers; men utter strangers to the land held sway over both. In the reign of John, Normandy and

the strictly French provinces were lost; Aquitaine alone was retained, a country as foreign to France as to England, and which found her account in loyalty to the more distant master. Then came fresh swarms of foreigners under Henry the Third, when at last the nation was ready for resistance. All these causes had combined to draw all the natives of the soil together. The heavy hand of despotism pressed alike upon the conquerors and the conquered. Men who were wholly alien to the realm were enriched and exalted at the expense of both. The Norman meanwhile had drunk in the air of the free island, and had learned that the laws of good King Edward were as good for him as for his English neighbour. He soon found that his true place was among the English people, not beside the foreign King. Speedily did the Norman lords and gentlemen adopt the name, the feelings, and at last the tongue of Englishmen. The bloody baptism of Lewes and of Evesham made the two races brethren in war and in peace for ever. In short, the true effect of the Norman Conquest was, not to crush or extinguish the Old-English spirit, but to call it out in a more definite and antagonistic form, and to give it a band of worthy proselytes in the conquering Normans themselves.

Thus did an event which seemed to be the very death of English freedom, prove in the end to be to it, above all others, a savour of life unto life. We will not speculate as to what might have been had William, instead of Harold, fallen upon the hill of Senlac. It is enough to see what has been. It is through the very event which might have seemed to cut off England for ever from her ancient being that she has—more than through any other cause —been enabled to preserve an uninterrupted historical continuity with her earliest days which has been denied to kindred nations which never went through her fiery trial.

III.

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CROWNS OF ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND.

THERE is something very remarkable in the way in which the popular mind, both in England and Scotland, looks at the whole history of the two countries, and especially at the question of the ancient relations between the two Crowns. It is not very wonderful that it is a point of honour with most Scotchmen to defend the Scottish side of a controversy between England and Scotland. The wonderful thing is that many Englishmen, and we suspect most Englishwomen, take the Scottish side against their own country. And it is more wonderful still that they do this, not from any calm conviction that England was wrong in the controversy, but from the same sort of unreasoning impulse which would more naturally have led them to take the other side. An Englishman, or a native of any other country, if he looks through the past history of his own land, will find plenty of occasions on which he must allow that his own nation and its sovereigns were utterly in the wrong. Still he feels a certain sympathy with his own people, even when they are in the wrong. His judgement draws him one way, and his feelings draw him another way. That the wars of Edward the Third in France were wars of purely unjust aggression it is impossible to deny.* The only conceivable palliation for them is that even virtuous men seem at the time to have persuaded themselves that those wars were just; and we must not forget that war in general, just or unjust, was not looked on then in the same light in which

* [This is rather too strong. See the Essay on Edward the Third.] [1872]

it is looked on now. Still Edward the Third and his son are popular heroes of English fancy. Reason may condemn the aggression, but the glory of Crecy and Poitiers is too dazzling to be withstood. The Black Prince is looked upon so exclusively as the model of chivalrous courage and chivalrous generosity that his real crimes and his real merits are alike forgotten. The cruel massacre of Limoges, an act condemned even in his own age, is forgotten. The real services which he rendered to his country in the Good Parliament are forgotten also. No ordinary English reader, even if he consents to the abstract proposition that the wars of Edward the Third and Henry the Fifth were unjust, ever sympathizes with the French who fought against them.

But from France turn to Scotland, and the scene is completely changed, In dealing with Scottish matters the popular and romantic English mind not only condemns its own countrymen, but throws itself, as a matter of feeling, against its own countrymen. Under the convenient name of Scots, a variety of persons, from William Wallace, perhaps from Malcolm Canmore, down to Charles Edward Stewart, are jumbled together. All alike are popular heroes, though their only common merit seems to be that they were all, in one way or another, enemies of England. Edward the First is distinctly unpopular, not because he seized the wool or because he was not eager to confirm the Great Charter, but because, with the full approbation of all England, he asserted his right to the ancient overlordship of Scotland, and because in the end he put William Wallace to death as a traitor. Even Elizabeth, the great Protestant Queen who defied Parma and Spain, comes off with a very doubtful reputation, because she cut off the head of a Scotchwoman whose crimes had aroused the righteous instincts of the Scottish people to depose her from their throne. Oddly enough, the greatest English sinners against Scotland, Henry the Eighth and Protector Somerset, are let off. If people think of Scotland in connexion with King

Henry, it is because Flodden was fought in his reign, and a King of Scots invading England is of course an object of romantic English sympathy. The brutal and causeless devastations of Scotland under Henry and Edward the Sixth, the utterly useless slaughter of Pinkie, seem to be wholly forgotten.

The cause of this strange, and probably unparalleled, direction of popular feeling is to be found in a sort of generous revulsion of sentiment, strengthened by the influence of a few great Scottish writers. A foolish and unworthy prejudice against Scotland and Scotsmen made way, under the charms of romance and poetry, for an equally unreasonable feeling of admiration for everything beyond the Tweed. The Scots, in the widest sense of the word, the inhabitants of modern Scotland of all tongues and races, first made up their own differences, and then made a sort of common conquest of English opinion. Lord Macaulay has forcibly shown how every fight in which the Gael overcame the Saxon, and every fight in which the Saxon overcame the Gael, has been thrown into a common stock of Scottish glory. Respectable citizens of Edinburgh, bearing, it may be, such Teutonic names as Smith, Brown, or Wilson, probably believe to this day that the grand charge of Celtic claymores at Killiecrankie somehow reflects honour on themselves. Mary Stewart, whose rejection by the Scottish people is one of the most honourable facts in Scottish history, has become a sacred possession of the Scottish nation, on whom Englishmen at least may not lay their unhallowed hands. And Englishmen, at all events Englishwomen, believe all this. They get their notions of English history from the romance of Hume, and they follow them up with the certainly not more unhistorical romances of Sir Walter Scott. Everything Scotch becomes invested with a sort of poetical and romantic halo. Wallace and Bruce are heroes, full of exploits and hairbreadth scapes. King Edward may possibly have been a general, a statesman, and a lawgiver, but

what are such prosaic merits when set against the charms of a hero of romance?

The fashion in these matters sets so strongly for the Scottish and against the English side, that it is very difficult to preserve strict impartiality in the matter. A revulsion against utter misrepresentation of truth may easily drive us too violently to the other side. When Englishmen condemn, almost without a hearing, the part taken by the whole English nation under the greatest and noblest King that England has seen for eight hundred years, one is perhaps tempted to do less than justice to his enemies. Trying to look at the matter as fairly as possible, it seems to me that, while the conduct of King Edward can be justified and more than justified, it does not at all follow that there is not a good deal to be said on the other side. The claim of Edward was quite clear enough to justify an honest man in asserting it. It was not so clear but that an honest man might also be justified in resisting it. Crimes were committed on both sides which fully account for bitter national animosity on both sides. In the end, the justice of the case, originally on the side of England, turned to the side of Scotland. I am not concerned to defend the way in which Scotland was dealt with either by Edward the Third or by any English king later than Edward the Third. I only ask for justice for his incomparably nobler grandfather. I only ask that our great king be not hastily condemned for the assertion of rights which were not, as I believe people generally fancy, some invention of his own, but which had been an inheritance of his predecessors on the English throne for more than three hundred and sixty years.

On the subject of the relations between the English and Scottish Crowns in early times, I have had occasion to say somewhat in the first volume of my History of the Norman Conquest, and especially in the Appendix. I there entered into some controversy with an able writer on the Scottish side, Mr. E. W. Robertson. I there expressed

a hope that I might, at some future time, be able to go into the matter more fully, as in that Appendix I could deal only with points belonging to the very earliest stages of the dispute. I mention this lest any one should mistake the present paper for the fulfilment of the promise which I then held forth. I mean it for nothing of the kind. To go fully into the matter from the beginning to the end, arguing, as I should have to do, against Mr. Robertson at almost every step, would require much more time and space than can be given to it in a single essay. But where the case on one side is generally misunderstood, a mere statement of the case, even without a minute discussion of the evidence, is worth something. I thought therefore that I might be doing service to historical truth by calling attention to the subject, by clearly showing the line which I trust some day to find an opportunity for defending in a more complete manner, and by getting rid of some mere popular misconceptions, which can never, unless quite unconsciously, affect the minds of real scholars on either side, but which form the whole belief on the subject in the minds of a great many people, Scottish and English alike.

First, then, I would venture to ask, What is Scotland, and who are the Scots? I must here say once more what, I have no doubt, I have said over and over again in one shape or another, but which must be said over and over again till people thoroughly take it in. No one can understand this question, or any other question in early mediæval history, unless he sets himself altogether free from the bondage of the modern map and of modern national nomenclature. When the disputed relations between the English and Scottish Crowns began, the names of England and Scotland seem not to have been in use at all. And if we choose to use them as convenient ways of expressing the English and Scottish territories as they then stood, we must still remember that the limits of those territories in no way answered to the modern limits of

England and Scotland. Part of modern England was not yet English, and a very large part of modern Scotland was not yet Scottish. The growth of the Scottish nation and kingdom is one of the most remarkable facts in history. It was formed by the fusing together of certain portions of all the three races which in the tenth century, as now, inhabited the Isle of Britain. Those three races may be most conveniently spoken of as English, Welsh, and Irish. A portion of each of these three races was, through a variety of political circumstances, detached from the main stock of its own nation, and all were brought into close connexion with one another. At the beginning of the tenth century the three were still distinct. The original Scots, a colony from Ireland, the original *Scotia*, had, centuries before, established themselves on the north-western coast of Britain, and, not very long before the period with which I am concerned, they had conquered or fraternized with or exterminated or assimilated the Picts, the people of the north-eastern part of modern Scotland. The relations between the Picts and the Scots I leave in intentional vagueness; they form a very difficult question, and one whose solution or exposition is in no way essential to my object. It is enough that at the beginning of the tenth century an independent Celtic potentate, the King of Scots, reigned over all modern Scotland north of the two great firths of Forth and Clyde, except so far as Scandinavian adventurers had already begun to occupy the islands and the extreme north of the mainland. Here then were the Scots, a Celtic people, whose dominant tongue was Irish, a tongue still represented by the modern Gaelic. These Scots then, a branch of the Irish nation, have given to the modern Scottish kingdom its name and its royal dynasty. But all that gave Scotland its historical importance came from other quarters. The application of the Scottish name to the whole people of modern Scotland was something like the application, so common before the restoration of the Kingdom of Italy, of the

Sardinian name to the people of Savoy, Piedmont, and Genoa. As far as ethnical connexion is concerned, this analogy will hold good. The great mass of the so-called Scots were Scots only by virtue of being subjects of the King of Scots. The great mass of the so-called Sardinians were Sardinians only by virtue of being subjects of the King of Sardinia. But there is this difference, that the King of Scots was really a King of Scots; the royal dynasty of Scotland was Scottish, while the royal dynasty of Sardinia was not Sardinian. But the position of that dynasty as Dukes of Savoy answered exactly to the position of the Kings of Scots. In both cases the cradle of the dynasty was one of the least valuable possessions of the reigning sovereign.

The King of Scots then, at the beginning of the tenth century, reigned north of the firths, over an independent Celtic people. The Scots seem to have submitted more than once to a certain superiority on the part of the Northumbrian kings; perhaps both they and the Northhumbrians submitted to the Imperial superiority of Charles the Great. But any submission of this sort was quite transient, and did not affect the later history. At the beginning of the tenth century the Scots were, as is allowed on all hands, perfectly independent.

But at that time the southern part of what is now Scotland had nothing to do with the Scots, and it had to do with the King of Scots only inasmuch as an independent branch of the Scottish royal family reigned in one part of it. All south-western Scotland, with much of what is now north-western England, formed the Kingdom of the Strathclyde Welsh. Over this kingdom, from an early date in the tenth century, Kings of the Scottish family reigned, but it formed a purely distinct state, independent equally of the King of Scots and of the King of the West-Saxons. The south-eastern part of modern Scotland, Lothian in the wide sense of the word, was simply part of Northumberland, that great region which,

sometimes under one king, sometimes under two or more, stretched from the Humber to the Forth. Lothian was therefore, then as now, a strictly Teutonic country, inhabited by a population mainly Anglian, and speaking, then as now, the Northumbrian dialect of English. In the language of the Scots, the land was Saxony and its people Saxons. An inroad into Saxony was a favourite exploit of the Scottish kings, and they had already begun to look with wistful eyes on the northern bulwark of Saxony, the border-fortress raised by the great Northumbrian Bretwalda, the castle of Eadwinesburh or Edinburgh.

Here then are the three elements of the modern Scottish nation: the true Scots, the Irish population north of the Forth; the Welsh of Strathclyde or Cumberland; the English of Lothian. Of these, the first and the third still survive and still retain their several languages, though, ever since they have been brought into connexion with each other, the English element has advanced and the Irish element has fallen back. The Welsh element has long since been absorbed by the English. The old Welsh kingdom no longer exists as a distinct division; it is divided between modern England and modern Scotland, and its language survives only in some points of local nomenclature to be traced out by inquiring antiquaries and philologers.

It was out of the fusion of these three elements that the modern Scottish nation arose, and their fusion arose wholly out of the relations into which they all of them entered with the dominant English power to the south. In 924 the kingdom of Eadward the Elder reached to the Humber. Beyond that river the Scots and the Strathclyde Welsh had never owned any superiority in any West-Saxon king. Northumberland, including of course Lothian, might be considered as owing some sort of vassalage, for the whole land had owned the supremacy of Ecgberht, and had even renewed its submission to Ælfred. In 924, according to our national Chronicles, the submission of

Northumberland was again renewed in a more solemn way; and with the renewal of the submission of Northumberland, Eadward also received—what no West-Saxon king had ever before received—the submission of the Scots and the Strathclyde Welsh. All the kings and princes north of the Humber, with the assent of their subjects, "chose Eadward to father and to lord." In the Latin phrase they *commended* themselves to him; they promised him fidelity and put themselves under his protection. This is the origin of the English claim to superiority over Scotland. It is also the origin of the close connexion between the three countries which united to form modern Scotland. All three—Scotland proper, Strathclyde, and Lothian (as a part of Northumberland)—became dependencies of the King of the English. Other changes speedily followed, all of which had a tendency to bring the three countries more closely together. The first change may for a moment have had an opposite effect. Æthelstan was the first to incorporate Northumberland, and Lothian as a part of it, with the English kingdom. That kingdom thus stretched to the Forth. After several revolts of the Danes, this incorporation was finally accomplished by Eadred. Meanwhile Eadmund, on a revolt of Strathclyde, conquered the country, and granted it to Malcolm of Scotland, to be held on tenure of military service. From that time it became the appanage of the eldest son of the Scottish King. In Eadred's time Edinburgh came into the possession of the Scots, by what means does not appear. At some later time, either under Eadgar or under Cnut—I have gone fully into that controversy elsewhere—all Lothian was ceded to the Scottish King; when and on what terms forms one of the points of dispute.

We thus find, early in the eleventh century, the three countries—Scotland proper, Strathclyde, and Lothian—all united under one sovereign, Strathclyde being usually granted out again to that sovereign's heir-apparent. A great step had thus been taken towards the formation of the

modern Scottish kingdom and nation. But all three formed part of the English Empire, and were subject to the Imperial authority of the West-Saxon or English King. The three countries however stood in three different relations to their overlord; and the different relations of Scotland and Strathclyde supply some of the best illustrations of those various kinds of relations, both between sovereigns and between private men, out of which the latter and more finished feudalism gradually grew.

What lies at the bottom of the whole thing is the personal relation between a man and his lord. The weaker party *commends* himself to the stronger; the man promises faithful service, the lord promises faithful protection. The holding of land by military or other service is not an essential or original part of the relation, but it gradually and easily came to be ingrafted upon it. Such land might be an original grant from the lord, held by his man on such terms as they might agree upon; or it might be the man's own allodial holding, which he surrendered to the lord, and received back to be held by him with fief. Out of these simple elements gradually grew up that elaborate feudal jurisprudence which had reached its perfection in the thirteenth century, but which was certainly not known in the tenth. But, even within the tenth century, the different relations of Scotland proper and Strathclyde mark the advance in the strictly feudal direction. The King of Scots, and all the people of Scots, chose Eadward the Elder to father and to lord. The motive was obvious: Eadward was powerful, and was clearly aiming at the conquest of the whole island. It was good policy to meet him half-way; it was also good policy, and something more, for all the Christian states of the island to unite against their heathen invaders. Such an union could not be effectually made except under West-Saxon leadership. The position of Wessex in Britain then was really not unlike that of Prussia in Germany just now.* By a

* [The events of 1870–1871, especially the assumption of the Imperial title by the Prussian King—the Bretwalda of Germany—have made the likeness still closer.] [1872]

great national act the King and the people of the Scots commended themselves to the West-Saxon King, exactly as numberless states on the continent found it expedient to commend themselves to the Emperor, or as the Duke of the Normans commended himself to the Duke of the French. There was nothing strange or degrading in the relation; it was the relation in which, in theory, all other princes stood to the Emperor. But the commendation of the Scottish King and people certainly did not make Scotland a territorial fief; still less did it bring with it any of the feudal incidents which were invented long after. In the course of the controversy it was argued that the English King could have no superior rights over Scotland, because Scotland was confessedly not liable to certain feudal incidents. The true answer would have been that the superiority dated from a time older than the feudal jurisprudence, from a time when any incidents of the kind were as yet unknown.

Scotland proper then—the Irish land north of the firths—was connected with the English King (or, in this relation we should rather say the English Emperor) by a tie of purely personal commendation. Strathclyde, on the other hand, was an early case of a real territorial fief. Eadmund conquered Strathclyde; he might of course have incorporated it with his own kingdom. Instead of so doing, he granted the land to Malcolm on condition of military service by sea and by land. Here we have a real fief, though of course all the niceties and intricacies of feudal law are not to be applied to the case. The vassalage of part of Strathclyde, namely of modern Cumberland, is not denied by any Scottish writer. Indeed, Scottish writers seem rather inclined to exaggerate the feudal position of Cumberland, as affording a means of escape from the fact of any superiority over Scotland itself. Every instance of homage is thus conveniently represented as being done for lands within the modern limits of England.

Strathclyde then was a territorial fief, but not a territorial

fief within the kingdom of England. But Lothian was an integral part of England. Jedburgh was as much a Northumbrian town as York. Unluckily the cession of Lothian is, as to its date and circumstances, a difficult and disputed point; there is no contemporary account of this transaction, such as there is of the other two. But it is hardly possible to doubt that the King of Scots must have been intended to be, with regard to Lothian, strictly an English earl, just as he was in later times for other lands within the later English frontier.

The three countries which make up modern Scotland were thus brought into a close political connexion with one another, while at the same time they stood in three distinct relations to the Imperial Crown of England. It followed naturally that the three should draw closer together, and that the original difference in the three tenures should come to be forgotten on both sides. The Scottish kings soon learned that English Lothian was by far the most valuable part of their dominions. They gradually identified themselves with their English territories, and they endeavoured to spread English culture over the rest of their possessions. As early as the reign of Macbeth they welcomed settlers from England and exiles from England, of whatever kind; native Englishmen dispossessed by the Conqueror, Norman settlers in England dissatisfied with him or his successors, all found a munificent welcome beyond the Tweed. The marriage of Malcolm and Margaret was the great turning-point. The Kings of Scots, from that time, became essentially English princes, and that just at the very moment when French princes were beginning to reign in England itself. English Lothian, and so much of their other territories as they succeeded in Anglicizing, became the real Kingdom of Scotland. The true Scots were in a manner forsaken by their own princes; they gradually came to be looked on simply as troublesome savages, whom the new English Kings of Scots had much ado to keep in any sort of submission.

Thus the English subjects of the King of Scots gradually came to be called Scots, and their land Scotland. A part of England, in short, got detached from the rest under the name of Scotland, and held the true Scotland beyond it in a somewhat unwilling connexion. And so long as the Kings of southern England were French, so long as the court language of England was French while that of Scotland was English, the King of Scotland's dominions were in very truth far more English than England itself.

Thus the Scottish kingdom gradually formed itself. Under such circumstances it was impossible that the different tenures by which the three parts of the dominions of the King of Scots were held should long be remembered. As the feudal jurisprudence developed, all of them became obsolete and almost unintelligible. That Scotland was held by personal commendation—that Strathclyde was a territorial fief, but a fief too old to be burthened with aids or wardship or marriage—that Lothian was in strictness an English earldom—were distinctions which naturally passed out of mind. Gradually there came to be no apparent alternatives except strict feudal tenure, as feudal tenure came to be understood, and the entire absence of subjection of any sort. The subjection of Scotland to the Imperial Crown of Britain was an historical fact; there was therefore a temptation on the English side to argue that Scotland was an ordinary fief, differing only in extent and dignity from any English earldom. On the other hand, it was equally an historical fact that Scotland had never been subject to the burthens incident to an ordinary fief; there was therefore a temptation on the Scottish side to deny that Scotland owed any kind of subjection whatever. In an age when the developed feudal jurisprudence was familiar to both sides, it was almost impossible that either side should cleave to the ancient precedents of the tenth century. It was in the nature of things that the lord should claim more, that the "man" should offer less, than those ancient precedents

dictated. More and less, that is, as regards Scotland and Strathclyde; as regards Lothian, an integral part of England, it is clear that the English Kings claimed less than their ancient right. Add to this that, except under some special circumstances, the fear of Danish invasion or the like, any sort of subjection would, from the days of the first commendation onwards, be galling to the Scottish King and his people. The homage due to the Emperor of Britain would never be very willingly paid. It would be paid when England was strong and Scotland weak; when England was weak it would be refused, perhaps not demanded. Homage for Scotland proper was paid to Eadgar, to Cnut, to Eadward, to William; it does not appear that it was ever paid to the feeble Æthelred. Then, in later times, the homage due for the different parts of what had become the Kingdom of Scotland got mixed up with various other questions. The Kings of Scots undoubtedly held territories within the later borders of England, both royalties and private estates, for which nobody doubted that homage was as fully due from them as from any English noble. Whenever a King of Scots did homage, it was always possible to raise the question whether the homage was done for the Kingdom of Scotland, or only for lands held in England. In many cases it might be convenient alike to lord and vassal to allow so delicate a question to remain unsettled either way. Then Henry the Second imposed conditions on his captive William the Lion which undoubtedly went far beyond all earlier precedent. Richard the First released Scotland from these special and novel burthens; did he or did he not also release her from all subjection of every kind? Here then were abundant materials for a never-ending controversy, a controversy in which, if right consisted in adherence to precedents which were no longer understood, it is quite certain that neither side could ever be exactly in the right. Here were questions perpetually arising which did not admit of any satisfactory settlement,

questions which at different times were sure to be answered in different ways and under different circumstances. When a weak King of England was troubled with every sort of domestic difficulties at home, while a national and popular dynasty filled the throne of Scotland, it was not likely that the English claim could be very effectually pressed. Things changed when England was ruled by the greatest King of his age, by well nigh the greatest English King of any age, and when a crowd of competitors for the Scottish crown were eager to lay their contending claims at his feet.

The claim which was then put forward by Edward the First was, as I before said, a claim which he had fair grounds for putting forward, but which the other side had fair grounds for contesting. It was easy to prove that Scotland owed some subjection to England; it was equally easy to prove that Scotland did not owe the subjection of an ordinary English fief. Vulgar and ill-informed Scottish writers always seize the opportunity for hurling every sort of abuse at Edward, seemingly for bringing forward his claims at all. Better-informed and more candid writers on the same side, who know the facts and who make no attempt to disguise them, are satisfied with charging him with ungenerous and unchivalrous conduct. This lack of generosity and chivalry on Edward's part seems to have consisted in his being statesman enough to see an advantage and to make use of it. But I would ask whether Kings and Governments even now commonly show much of chivalry or generosity to one another, or whether it is to be reasonably expected that they should show much of such feelings? An angel on earth, like Saint Lewis, may act otherwise; from ordinary human Kings, Presidents, or Prime Ministers it is enough to expect that they do not, in any time or place, put forth claims which are palpably dishonest. If a claim has any fair ground to go upon, to put it forth in the form, the time, the place, in which it can be pressed with most effect, is generally held to be a mere

question of policy. He who chooses the worst time for such a purpose, instead of the best, may possibly show chivalry or generosity; but no statesman, whether of the thirteenth or of the nineteenth century, will speak highly of his wisdom.

Edward then, I hold, had a fair case—such a case, I mean, as would justify an honest man in putting forth an ordinary claim in an ordinary court of law. He claimed an ancient right of his crown, which his predecessors had exercised whenever they could: he claimed it in the only shape which the claim was likely to take in his days. If in some points he claimed more, in other points he claimed less, than ancient precedents would have given him. In reading the lengthy pleadings in the great suit before the Lord Superior two things constantly strike us. As a rule, the whole matter had reduced itself to a question whether the land north of the Tweed, looked at as a whole, was or was not a fief of England. But ever and anon we are struck with various signs which show a vague feeling, a sort of lurking memory, that the real historical issue was not quite so simple as this. Here and there an expression is found implying some sort of distinction between Scotland, Lothian, and Galloway—the representative of ancient Strathclyde. More commonly we find a very distinct feeling on all sides that a kingdom, even if held in fief, differed in some way or other from an ordinary feudal holding. More remarkable than all are two passages in which the Lord Superior receives the ancient and now well nigh forgotten title of Emperor. In one of the earliest documents belonging to the question, one earlier than the great conference at Norham, Robert Bruce asks for the kingdom of Scotland of Edward as "his sovereign Lord and *Emperor*."* So, when the question is raised whether the controversy between the candidates should be judged by the Imperial law or by any other, one of the prelates consulted answers that the King of England must follow the law of his own realm,

* Palgrave, Documents, p. 29. "Sire Robert de Brus prie a nostre seigneur le rey come son sovereign seigneur et *son Empreur*."

because he is himself Emperor in his own dominions.* And passages are rather numerous in which freedom from all subjection to the Empire and to the laws of the Empire is spoken of as a sort of privilege of the Crown of England, and of Scotland as a member thereof. This was of course the old notion. The King of the English was, within his own island, what the Emperor was in the rest of the world. He owed no submission to Cæsar, and he himself stood in the place of Cæsar to all the other princes of Britain. The Imperial position of the Old-English kings must be thoroughly grasped before the real nature of Scottish subjection can be understood. In the full Imperial theory, all kingdoms, Scotland of course included, owed submission to the Roman Emperor. But our West-Saxon kings put in an exception for Britain, as being in some sort another world, and they claimed to be themselves Emperors within its borders. This ancient position, by that time well nigh forgotten, is invoked both by the elder Bruce and by the Bishop. But commonly the matter becomes a mere question of fief or no fief, allowing for any special privileges belonging to a fief which was also a kingdom.

It must be borne in mind that Edward was invited to decide the disputed succession to the Scottish crown. He was invited to do so by Robert Bruce, by the Seven Earls,† and by the Scots generally. The Seven Earls appealed to him as their natural protector against the wrongs inflicted by the Regents; Robert Bruce, as we have seen, appealed to him in the ancient character of Emperor of Britain. Now can any reasonable man blame Edward for demanding that those who thus invoked his interference should make a full acknowledgement of his claims? In the judgement of any statesman, the moment was now come to make

* Rishanger, ed. Riley, p. 255. "Episcopus Bibliensis requisitus dixit quod dominus rex secundum leges per quas judicat subjectos suos debet procedere in casu isto, *quia hic censetur Imperator*." I confess that I do not know who "Episcopus Bibliensis" was. I can only guess that he was some Bishop *in partibus*, perhaps of Byblos in Syria.

† See Palgrave, Documents, p. 14.

certain what was before uncertain. Edward put forth his claim, a good and honest claim, urged in good faith. No doubt an equally honest answer might on some points have been made to the claim; but no answer was made. After a little hesitation, all the competitors for the crown admitted Edward's claims to the superiority in the fullest extent, and they gave him, as surely was reasonable, the temporary possession of the kingdom in dispute. And, if any man's conduct ever was marked by thorough justice and disinterestedness, that of King Edward was so marked throughout the whole business. Every claimant was fully and fairly heard; judgement was given in favour of the claimant who clearly had the best right; the new King was at once put into full possession of his kingdom and all its appurtenances. Most princes of that age, and of many other ages, would have devised some excuse for detaining the kingdom itself, or some castle in it, or some other material hold over it. That is to say, most princes would have acted in the matter of Scotland as Philip the Fair did act to Edward himself in the matter of Aquitaine. Edward's conduct was throughout honest and aboveboard. He required the acknowledgement of his claims; he received it; he then acted justly and honourably according to the theory of his own position which he had put forth, and which all the competitors had acknowledged. And, more than all, he rejected the tempting proposal of Hastings and Bruce to divide the kingdom. Had Edward wished to take any unfair advantage, here was his chance. Two of the competitors, when their claim to the whole kingdom was rejected, demanded a share, according to the English usage in the case of female fiefs. No proposal could have been more tempting, had Edward sought anything but what he honestly held to be his due. It was clearly his interest to have three weak vassals rather than one powerful one. But Edward, as he did throughout the case, calmly inquired into law and precedent, and ruled, in conformity with at least later law and precedent, that the Kingdom of

Scotland could not be divided. Edward may have taken a wrong view of his own rights; but of anything like unfair or underhand dealing no man stands more thoroughly acquitted.

The competitors then, the new King, the great men of the realm generally, accepted Edward's claims. But it may be, and it has been, doubted how far they really spoke the voice of the Scottish nation. We must never forget who these competitors and other great men really were. None of the competitors, and comparatively few of the great men of the realm, were genuine Scots in either the older or the later sense. Setting aside foreign princes like Eric of Norway and Florence of Holland, the competitors, Bruce, Balliol, Comyn, Hastings, and the rest, were neither Dalriadic Scots, nor Welshmen of Strathclyde, nor Englishmen of Lothian. They were Norman nobles, holding lands both in England and in Scotland, who might throw in their lot with England or Scotland at pleasure, but who did much more commonly throw in their lot with England. Balliol and the elder Bruce were essentially Englishmen—Englishmen, that is, in the sense in which any other English noble of Norman descent was an Englishman. John Comyn of Buchan was throughout a faithful adherent of Edward; John Comyn of Badenoch and the younger Bruce identified themselves more freely with Scotland. But none of them were Scots in the ethnological sense; none of them were Scots even in the sense of being natives and inhabitants of Scotland, with no interests beyond its borders. John Balliol had lands alike in Scotland, England, and France. After being a king in Scotland and a prisoner in England, he retired to live as a private French noble on his French property. Such men did not, and could not, really represent the feelings of any part of the Scottish people. The event proved that in the heart of the nation there was a feeling against English dominion in any shape which the great nobles did not share. But the apparent consent was universal. Edward might boast, like his great namesake

and ancestor, that the King of Scots, and all the people of Scots, chose him to father and to lord. And again we may ask, Who were the Scottish people? It is plain that the whole affair was one in which the original Scots took no share, or a share hostile to what is commonly looked on as the Scottish cause. The Scots who resisted Edward were the English of Lothian, The true Scots, out of hatred to the "Saxons" nearest to them, leagued with the "Saxons" further off. Candid Scottish writers allow that the true Scots of the Highlands were bitterly hostile to the younger Bruce, and strongly favourable to Edward. No doubt, had Edward kept possession, he would soon have become the object of their hostility. As it was, the true Scots were the faithful allies of Edward against the English of Lothian.

We thus see Edward the acknowledged Lord Superior, and John of Balliol, undoubtedly the lawful heir, reigning as his vassal. Then comes the question of the appeals. It does not appear that any appeal had ever before been carried from the court of the King of Scots to the court of the King of England. We may be quite sure that no such subtleties were ever dreamed of in the tenth century. But the idea of an appeal to the court of the overlord naturally grew out of the principles of the new feudal jurisprudence. Edward himself, as Duke of Aquitaine, was often summoned to the courts of the King of France, and he does not seem to have disputed the right of the King of France so to summon him. But we may be quite sure that Edward's predecessors in Aquitaine in the tenth century as little thought of paying any such sign of submission to their lord at Laon or Paris as his predecessors in Wessex at the same time thought of requiring any such sign of submission from their vassal beyond the Forth. The whole notion of an elaborate system of courts, such as could allow of such appeals, is later than the earliest homage paid either for Aquitaine or for Scotland. It could not be part of the original bargain in either case, but in both cases the claim grew up with the gradual developement of feudal ideas. And, after all, it was the

Scots themselves who, from the fact of Edward's superiority over the kingdom, drew the inference that they might appeal to his courts. Two Scottish subjects in very different positions, Roger Bartholomew, burgess of Berwick, and Macduff, a near kinsman of the Earl of Fife—surely a genuine Scot, if there ever was one—dissatisfied with the justice to be had in the courts of the King of Scots, appealed to the courts of his acknowledged feudal superior. The thing was a novelty; but it was an obvious consequence from a state of things which was now universally admitted, and it was not a novelty of Edward's devising. Ordinary human nature on Edward's part was not likely to refuse what would seem to be so fair and honourable a way of increasing his power. But ordinary human nature on the Scottish part could hardly fail to be offended with what would seem to be a further humiliation of Scotland.

Next came the Scottish alliance with France, then at war with England, an alliance which gradually led to a series of mutual hostilities, which I need not recount at length, as they do not immediately bear on the relations between the two crowns. The important points are, that the first hostilities were the act of the Scots, and that the King of Scots, as soon as the war had actually begun, renounced his homage. The assertion of national independence might be just and expedient; but the attempt to assert it by a process of feudal law was simply absurd. Then Edward, in 1296, conquered Scotland, and received the abdication of the King and the general submission of the country. The kingdom was his by conquest in a lawful war not of his seeking. I am not saying that the Scots might not be fully justified in revolting against him. All I say is that Edward was fully justified in occupying Scotland, and in putting down such revolts. With the conquest in 1296 the history of the old relations between the Crowns comes to an end. From 1296 to 1328 the question was, not whether Scotland should be held by its own King in feudal dependence on England, but whether Scotland should become, as Northumberland and Wales had

in different ages become, an integral portion of the English kingdom. Meanwhile a new dynasty, that of Bruce, had arisen in Scotland. In 1328 the legitimacy of the new dynasty and the independence of the Scottish kingdom were fully acknowledged by England. From that day forth, wars between England and Scotland must be judged by the same principles as wars between any other two independent nations. The renunciation of 1328 wiped out the first commendation of 924; it wiped out what we may call the second commendation of 1292; it wiped out the conquest of 1296. The attempts made by the English Kings to fall back on the earlier state of things, to claim again a homage which they had expressly surrendered, to set up pretenders against a dynasty whose rights they had expressly acknowledged, were all simply dishonest. The charges of craft, bad faith, and the like, which Scottish writers most unjustly bring against Edward the First, may all be brought with perfect justice against Edward the Third.

The little space I have left I will give to point out one or two popular misconceptions. I fancy that people in general quite mistake the chronology of the case. They fancy that the whole of Edward's reign was taken up in an attempt to conquer Scotland. Instead of this, it was only the latter part of his reign which was occupied by Scottish matters at all. Edward began to reign in 1272. In the nineteenth year of his reign, 1291, the conference at Norham began. In 1296 came the first hostilities and the first conquest. In 1297 came the revolt of William Wallace and his victory at Stirling. In 1298 the battle of Falkirk crushed the revolt, but the war lingered till the surrender of Stirling in 1304. In that year Edward was again undisputed lord of all Scotland. Scotland was annexed to England as an integral part of the kingdom, and was to be represented in the English Parliament. In 1306, the year before Edward's death, came the murder of Comyn, the revolt and coronation of the younger Bruce. At Edward's death, in 1307, the new King was again a fugitive.

I speak of the wars of Wallace and Bruce as revolts. Their revolts may, like many other revolts, have been justifiable, but they were revolts. Neither of them, Bruce far less than Wallace, was resisting an invader. As for William Wallace, we need not look upon him either as the faultless hero which he appears in Scottish romance, nor yet as the vulgar ruffian which he appears in English history. His tenure of power in Scotland was very short, but for a man who started, as he did, from nothing, to rise, even for a moment, to the command of armies, and even to the government of the kingdom, shows that he must have possessed some very great qualities. That the great nobles mostly shrank from him, or supported him very faintly, is rather to his credit; it sets him forth more distinctly as a national champion. On the other hand, it is impossible to deny the fiendish brutalities practised by him in England, brutalities which fully explain the intense hatred with which every English writer speaks of him, and which were certainly not retaliation for any cruelties on the part of Edward. Candid Scottish writers allow that no useless slaughter or ravages can be laid to Edward's charge. In the whole course of his warfare he stands chargeable with nothing which even our age would call cruelty, unless it be in the storming of Berwick, where the personal insults of the besieged seem to have stirred him up to fury. At other times we find nothing of the kind, but we do find him checking and reproving the cruelties of others, including his own unworthy son. As for the execution of William Wallace, it should be remembered that his was the only Scottish blood shed by an English executioner before the murder of Comyn, and that he brought his fate upon himself. Every other man in Scotland had submitted. Wallace was invited to surrender to the King's mercy. That mercy had been extended to every man who had sought it, including many who had broken their oaths to Edward over and over again. Wallace refused, and refused with insult. He was seized by Sir John Menteith,

Edward's commander at Dumbarton, an act of official duty which has been strangely turned into a betrayal.* He could now hardly look for the mercy which he had scorned. In the eyes of Edward and of every Englishman he was simply a traitor, robber, murderer, of the blackest dye. On such men the law took its course in 1305 just as it did in 1745.

The revolt of Robert Bruce was, in every way, far less justifiable than that of William Wallace. Wallace was certainly a native Scotsman in the wider sense of the word. His name seems to imply that he was a Welshman of Strathclyde. By his own account he had never sworn fealty to Edward. The position of Robert Bruce was very different. He has become so thoroughly mythical a being that it may be necessary to explain to many people who he was. One Scottish romance goes so far as to make him defeat Edward the First at Bannockburn! Another, of older date, identifies him with his own grandfather, makes him the competitor for the crown, but makes him also proudly refuse to do homage for it. We have seen that Robert Bruce the grandfather was an Englishman, a faithful subject of Edward, eager to admit Edward's supremacy, ready to have the kingdom divided. His son was an utterly obscure person, who plays no part in the politics of the time. His grandson, the future King, possessor of great Scottish estates through his mother, seems always to have inclined to Scotland rather than to England. Still he was Edward's subject; he had sworn to him and served under him over and over again. At last, when the country was at peace, when Edward's government was universally submitted to, Robert Bruce treacherously and sacrilegiously murdered John Comyn, the man, be it remembered, who, after the male line of Balliol, was undoubtedly the heir of the Scottish crown. After such

* Wallace was "betrayed," not *by* Menteith, but *to* Menteith, by his own servant Jack Short. From this the English chronicler Peter Langtoft draws the moral that there is no honour among thieves.

a crime there could be no hope of pardon. Bruce then threw a desperate stake; he assumed kingship; while the great Edward lived he lived the life of an outlaw and a vagabond; over Edward's wretched son he won an easy triumph. Robert Bruce undoubtedly proved himself in the end a great captain and a great king; but that fact should blind no one to the infamous beginning of his career. That all who were concerned in the murder of Comyn met with their merited punishment, who can wonder? Who can wonder that lesser degrees of punishment fell on the other ringleaders of the revolt? The nature of punishments, the form of death, the degree of the severity of imprisonment, are questions between the habits of one age and those of another; but it is quite certain that Edward punished no man or woman who would not be held liable to punishment at the present moment. Indeed, when we look at the atrocities which living Englishmen have committed and justified in India and in Jamaica, King Edward need not blush for the comparison. The man who pardoned his enemies over and over again, who checked the cruelties of his own son, who, in the suppression of three rebellions, put no man to death who had not added murder to treason, who, save in one case of a stormed town, everywhere carried on war with unparalleled clemency, would hardly have worshipped at the shrine of a Hodson or joined in the festive reception of an Eyre.

One word more. I do not regret that Scotland won her independence. I cannot regret the formation of a nation, a nation essentially of English blood and speech, a nation which soon developed many noble qualities, and showed itself fully worthy of the independence which it won. On the field of Bannockburn I can almost bring myself to sympathize with the great and wise King of Scots against the foolish and cowardly heir of the greatest of later Englishmen. But these things do not touch the character of the great Edward. The real honour of Scotland in no

way requires the perversion of historical truth, or the depreciation of a King whose object was to unite our island as we see it united now. The vassalage of Scotland to England ought by this time to be looked on as calmly as the vassalage of Northumberland and Mercia to Wessex. An Englishman born north of the Tweed should deem himself as little bound to malign Edward as an Englishman born north of the Thames deems himself bound to malign Ecgberht. Or, if a southern victim must be had, let Scottish indignation spend itself on brutal devastators of Scotland like Henry the Eighth and Protector Somerset, not on the noble prince of whom the contemporary poet so truly sang:—

> "Totus Christo traditur rex noster Edwardus;
> Velox est ad veniam, ad vindictam tardus."

I have now merely sketched out my line of argument both as to the general constitutional question, and as to the personal character of the great Edward. I trust some day or other to work out the whole matter more fully, as fully as I have worked out the two or three points on which I have entered into direct controversy with Mr. Robertson. In the meanwhile, I would recommend to all who are interested in the matter a careful study of the original chronicles and documents, and a comparison of these with the later romances which have supplanted them. As a guide in such a task, I will not venture to recommend a book for which I must nevertheless confess a certain liking, the anonymous volume called "The Greatest of the Plantagenets." The book has much in it that is good and useful; but it is too much of a mere panegyric; the writer throughout holds, what I certainly do not hold, that the honour of Edward requires the sacrifice of every one who, either in England or Scotland, in any way withstood him. I will rather choose my expositor in the ranks of the enemy. I will send students of the original authorities to a really learned and candid Scottish historian as their

harmonist. In Mr. Burton's lately published History of Scotland the matter is treated in a way which does honour to the writer. Mr. Burton has not wholly triumphed over national prejudices, though in many passages he does justice to Edward on particular points in a way in which I suspect that no Scottish writer has forestalled him. In many cases the inferences which I draw from the facts are very different from those which Mr. Burton draws. But his facts and my facts are the same throughout. Mr. Burton's learning hinders him from neglecting any fact; his candour hinders him from concealing or misrepresenting any fact. How far such a book may be acceptable to the less informed and more deeply prejudiced classes of Mr. Burton's own countrymen, I do not profess to know. I hail it as a great step towards the fair examination of a great historical question, which should now be looked on purely as an historical question, not as involving the honour of either of two portions of one happily united realm.

IV.

SAINT THOMAS OF CANTERBURY AND HIS BIOGRAPHERS.*

Vita S. Thomæ Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi et Martyris. Epistolæ Sancti Thomæ Cantuariensis et aliorum. Gilberti Episcopi Londoniensis Epistolæ. Herberti de Boseham Opera quæ extant omnia. Edidit J. A. Giles, LL.D. 8 volumes. Oxford, 1845.

Joannis Sarisburiensis Opera omnia. Collegit J. A. Giles, J.C.D. 5 volumes. Oxford, 1848.

The History of Latin Christianity. By Henry Hart Milman, D.D. Vol. III. London, 1854.

The Life and Martyrdom of Saint Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury and Legate of the Holy See. By John Morris, Canon of Northampton. London, 1859.

Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. A Biography. By James Craigie Robertson, M.A., Canon of Canterbury. London, 1859.

A FULL catalogue of the materials for the history of the wonderful man whose name heads this article, a complete list of all the books, old and new, of which he has been the subject, would take up a space rather suited for an article itself than for the mere heading of one. We have selected a few only of the most recent and important. We have original materials of every sort,—chronicles, biographies, private letters, state-papers; we have the panegyrics of friends, the invectives of enemies, the correspondence

* [As this article gave rise to some controversy at the time, I reprint it exactly as it originally appeared.] [1872]

of the man himself. And as his own age was divided in its opinion of him, ours seems to be divided no less. He has still enemies who pursue him with the fierceness of a Gilbert Foliot, and idolators who worship him with the devotion of a Herbert of Bosham. There is hardly any man of past times for estimating whose life and character we have such ample means. Every action of his own, every action of others with regard to him, has been chronicled and commented on by men who were both eyewitnesses and actors. And there are few men about the main features of whose history there is so little doubt. Here and there, among the multitude of witnesses, we find unimportant contradictions; here and there we may have our doubts as to the accuracy of a date or the genuineness of a letter; but the main events of his life, from his birth in London to his murder at Canterbury, are known to us as clearly and vividly as the transactions of our own time. Our materials are not confined either to the land of his birth or to the land of his exile. The vast Thomaic correspondence spreads over the whole Latin world. The terms of peace between a King of England and an Archbishop of Canterbury fluctuated according to the triumphs and the failures of a German Emperor in Italy. Our materials, in short, are infinite; indeed, until somebody shall kindly put them in order for us, they are overwhelming. We know, or by the help of a decent editor we might know, all about everybody and everything. As to mere matters of fact, the points of controversy, for so vast a field, are exceedingly few. The peculiarity of the history is, that, with the same facts before them, no two people seem to be content to draw the same inferences.

The cause of all this diversity and controversy—a diversity and controversy most fatal to historic truth—is to be traced to the unhappy mistake of looking at the men of the twelfth century with the eyes of the nineteenth; and still worse, of hoping to extract something from the events of the twelfth century to do service in the controversies of

the nineteenth. Thomas of Canterbury has become surrounded by a mist of theological and quasi-theological disputation; it is impossible even to name him without raising a storm of controversy. For how is the man to be spoken of? "Thomas à Becket," on the one hand, and "Saint Thomas of Canterbury" both have their dangers, while every intermediate form expresses some intermediate shade of estimation. "Becket" is perhaps neutral; "Archbishop Becket" carries with it a degree of reverence for the office, if not for the man. And again, it is doubtful whether his own age even called him Thomas Becket, much less Thomas à Becket, or Becket alone.* King Henry the Eighth's proclamation has converted his historical title of "Saint Thomas of Canterbury" into a badge of party. Otherwise we might probably have called him Saint Thomas with no more offence than is incurred by speaking historically of Saint Dominic or Saint Dunstan. By way of being safe, we mean to call him, as his contemporaries called him, Thomas, which we hope will not commit us to anything either way. Thomas of London, Thomas of Canterbury, Thomas the Archdeacon, the Chancellor, the Archbishop, and finally the Martyr, are the only descriptions by which he was commonly known in his own day.

But when we have settled his name, we come to the more important question of his character. Was he a good or a bad man? Is he worthy of honour or of dishonour?

* His father was undoubtedly called Gilbert Becket; but in the twelfth century surnames were very fluctuating, and a son, especially if a churchman, did not at all necessarily bear his father's name. The most natural way of calling him would be *Thomas of London*, just like John of Oxford and Herbert of Bosham, and we find him actually so called by Gervase (col. 1377). We find the Archbishop himself only once called "Thomas Becket," namely, by the knights at his death, according to Edward Grim (ap. Giles, i. 75), where it may be very likely an unusual expression of contempt. This remark, as far as we know, has been made by no English writer; but we find from M. Buss's work (p. 150) that German industry has forestalled us: M. Buss has found one more instance of the use of the name "Becket," which (perhaps through Dr. Giles's fault) we cannot verify.

To two classes of inquirers no question can be more easy to settle. It is a very simple business to rule either that an archbishop must be right who opposes a king, or that a king must be right who opposes an archbishop. But at the tribunal of historical criticism no such sweeping general principles are admitted. Nor does it at all decide the question to say which side we should take if the same controversy were to arise now. What would be very unreasonable and inexpedient now may have been exactly the opposite seven hundred years back. If we wish fairly to judge of the right and the wrong between Henry and Thomas, we must first of all shut our eyes to all modern controversies whatever. We must not carry into that region any modern theories about Church and State, about Catholicism and Protestantism. We must not think whether the events of those times can be made to help High Church, Low Church, or Broad Church. Even whether we are right or wrong in having no spiritual dealings with the Bishop of Rome, is a question which has just nothing to do with the matter. Yet it has been with at least a side-glance to questions of this sort that the history of Henry and Thomas has been for the most part recently written. If we want to read or write it as it should be read or written, we must forget everything of the kind. We have before us two of the foremost men of the twelfth century; it is only by the customs, the principles, the light and knowledge, of the twelfth century that we can ever fairly judge them.

Cautions of this kind are more necessary with regard to the dispute between Henry and Thomas than with regard to almost any other portion of history. With regard to many other controversies of past times, it is almost impossible to avoid looking at them with the eyes of our own day. In many cases, within proper limits, it is even right that we should do so. The controversies of remote ages and countries may be closely analogous to controversies of our own day. The controversies of

our own country in past times may be but the beginning of controversies still going on among ourselves. In such cases the side taken in present politics will always decide the general estimate of past politics. We only ask for the men and measures of the past, what we should ask for the men and measures of the present, that opposition and criticism be fair and honest, that particular men and particular actions be not misrepresented, and that it be never forgotten that, both then and now, wise and good men may be found on both sides. But the twelfth century stands in a peculiar position. It was a highly important period, fruitful in great men and great events; but its work was a silent one, and its controversies have, less than those of most ages either before or after, any direct bearing upon present affairs. The events of the age which came before, and those of the age which followed it, speak at once to our hearts. The spectacle of a nation, and that the English nation, overcome by foreign enemies, made bondmen and strangers in their own land, is one which requires no explanation. The struggle of Englishman and Norman is one which awakens sympathies common to all time and places:

εἷς οἰωνὸς ἄριστος, ἀμύνεσθαι περὶ πάτρης,

is a sentiment which speaks equally to the heart, whether it be put into the mouth of Hector, of Hereward, or of Garibaldi. The thirteenth century again has for every Englishman an interest of another kind. We have now entered on the England of our own time; the great struggle has begun which still continues; we have begun to walk among that goodly company of statesmen, heroes, and patriots which leads us from Langton and Grosseteste and Winchelsea, from Fitzwalter and De Montfort and Roger Bigod, on to the Peel, the Russell, and the Gladstone of our own day. Compared with the eleventh century and with the thirteenth, the age of Henry and Thomas seems like something with which we have nothing

to do, and which we can hardly understand. The political position of England was like nothing before it or after it. In the eleventh century and in the thirteenth, there was an English king and an English people; but in the twelfth such objects are hardly discernible. There is indeed a King of England, the mightiest and richest prince of Europe; but he is a mere foreigner, a Frenchman living in France, devoting his energies to French objects, and holding England almost as a province of Anjou. And as with the position of the island, so with its internal controversies. We imagine that no Roman Catholic or High Churchman would claim for the clergy a freedom from secular jurisdiction in criminal cases, or would think the exclusive right of the Archbishop of Canterbury to crown the King of England a matter for which it was worth while to resist even unto death. In the twelfth century the case was much less clear. Thomas and Henry, in short, were two very remarkable men in a very remarkable age, who engaged in a controversy about which there could not be two opinions now, but about which opposite sides were then taken by the best and wisest men of the age. If a man will study the materials before him fully and fairly, he will probably rise up with very considerable respect for both disputants on the whole, mingled with strong condemnation of particular actions of both. Thomas often disgraced a good cause by violence and obstinacy; Henry disgraced a cause equally good by mean cruelty and petty personal persecution, and sometimes, which Thomas never did, he allowed momentary passion to hurry him into practically giving up his cause altogether.

On the modern writers on the subject we do not intend to enlarge at length. Though the history has been touched on incidentally by some very distinguished men, it has never been made the subject of any separate work of first-rate merit. We will therefore touch briefly on the most important modern writers on the subject, and then proceed

to give our own estimate of Thomas himself and his contemporary biographers.

Lord Lyttelton and Mr. Berington were probably the first, among the modern "amici" and "inimici Thomæ,"* who could give any reason for their friendship or enmity. Their histories of Henry the Second were both of them highly creditable to their authors at a time when historical learning was at its lowest ebb. In an age of second-hand knowledge they had really read the contemporary writers. Each maintains his own position well, and each may be still turned to with profit, even after the accumulation of so much recent literature on the subject. Mr. Berington, we may add, though an apologist of Thomas, is by no means a blind admirer; he is not a Herbert of Bosham, but claims the higher character of a John of Salisbury.

Among more general historians, in whose pages Thomas and Henry necessarily play a considerable part, Dr. Lingard at once occurs as a Roman Catholic writer of much the same school as Mr. Berington. Both of them have the wisdom to write, not as Roman Catholics, but as ordinary men; they at all events affect impartiality, and of course are much more likely to influence Protestant judgements than if they checked them at the beginning by any ostentatious display of their peculiar dogmas. On the other hand, Southey's agreeable, but very superficial, Book of the Church contains one of the very best of what we may call the incidental biographies of Thomas. It is full, vivid, and sympathizing. It is clear that the heroic grandeur of the Catholic saint appealed irresistibly to the heart of the poet, even while invested with the character of a Protestant controversialist.

Thomas also figures very prominently in Thierry's well-known History of the Norman Conquest, where he is pressed into the service of that writer's peculiar theories.

* Among the Letters is one (Giles, iv. 256) headed "Alexandro papæ et omnibus cardinalibus *Inimici Thomæ* Cantuariensis archiepiscopi."

He is made to figure as an English patriot contending against Norman oppressors. Of this utterly untenable notion, and of the small nucleus of truth around which M. Thierry has gathered a mass of very attractive romance, we shall have again to speak.

The more recent literature on the subject begins with the Remains of the late Mr. R. H. Froude. Strangely enough, the first recent apologist of Saint Thomas of Canterbury was brother of the apologist of King Henry the Eighth. The elder Froude, one of the original leaders of the Oxford Tract movement, was a man of ability and independent thought, but, as one might expect, he approached the subject from a wholly false point of view. His case was one of the most conspicuous of misconceiving history, in consequence of seeing it through an atmosphere of modern controversy. The subject attracted him from some fancied analogies between the position of the Church in the twelfth century and the nineteenth. The career of Thomas occupies the whole of the third volume of Mr. Froude's Remains, but a large portion of the narrative part is from another hand, no less an one, we believe, than Dr. Newman's. Mr. Froude's own labours were chiefly given to translating and partially arranging the Epistles, a task before which any amount of energy might excusably have broken down.

After Mr. Froude came Dr. Giles. We suppose we must allow the praises of zeal and research to a man who has edited, translated, and written more books than any other living English scholar. But really we can give him no other praise. The Epistles, as edited in his *Sanctus Thomas Cantuariensis*, are, as most later writers have complained, a heap of confusion, made far worse confounded by Dr. Giles himself. The principle of arrangement is an elaborate puzzle which renders it almost hopeless to find any particular letter; the indexes are very meagre, and the mere editing is exceedingly bad.*

* We thoroughly agree with Mr. Robertson's wish, that a really good edition

Dr. Giles has indeed also given us the Life and Letters in two volumes of English, in which there is an attempt to arrange some of the letters in the order of time. But scholars do not want a translation—and a very bad translation too—of some of the letters, but an intelligible edition of the original text of all. Dr. Giles's attempt at original biography amounts to little more than a filling-up of interstices, and is moreover as poor and superficial as may be. Nearly everything that is good in it is copied from Mr. Froude.

The life and death of Thomas have also been taken up by two writers of a widely different stamp from either Mr. Froude or Dr. Giles. Professor Stanley, in his Historical Memorials of Canterbury, has given us a harmonized narrative of the martyrdom, written with such minuteness, life, and truth, that we deeply regret that it extends to the martyrdom alone, and does not take in the whole history. No less admirable is his treatment of what we may call the posthumous history of Thomas in the chapter on the Shrine of Becket. The Thomaic controversy again occupies a large portion of the third volume of Dean Milman's Latin Christianity. With some drawbacks, this is the best English life of Thomas we know, though the narrative perhaps suffers a little from over-compression; and though we think that the Dean passes on the whole too harsh a judgement on Thomas, it is only fair to add that he sometimes bears rather hard upon Henry also. Still his narrative, allowing for some of those little slips in names and details into which it is strange to find so really learned a man as Dr. Milman so constantly falling, is the very best history of Thomas we know, far better, considering its scale, than the more special ones which we have now to mention.

The year 1859 produced two rival biographies of our hero; the works of the Roman Catholic Canon of North-

of the whole literature on the subject should form part of the series now publishing by authority of the Master of the Rolls.

hampton, and of the Protestant Canon of Canterbury. On these we might be tempted to dilate at some length, as the contrast between them is very curious and amusing. Each of the rival canons has read his books well and accurately; each brings local inspiration to the task; each does his best, such as it is, to be fair; but each is disqualified by invincible prejudices, and the work of each alike labours under incurable objections in point of form. Canon Morris writes in a spirit of undiscriminating admiration; Canon Robertson writes in a spirit of carping and fault-finding, with which we have still less sympathy. Canon Morris might have written a purely devotional life of Saint Thomas of Canterbury for members of his own communion, and no fair person would have objected; or he might have written a historical life in the same spirit of prudence as Mr. Berington and Dr. Lingard; but he has confounded the two ideas together, and has produced something far too historical for purely devotional use, while, as a history, it is sure to offend every Protestant reader. Canon Robertson has worked up into a book two old articles from the defunct English Review, written, it would seem, against Mr. Froude and Dr. Giles. The book retains far too palpable traces of its origin in its somewhat poor and heavy attempts at wit, in its constant sarcasms on the writers reviewed, and its occasional allusions to things quite unintelligible to those who have not all the numbers of the English Review by heart. Nothing for instance can be truer, but nothing can be more out of place, than the elaborate criticism on Dr. Giles's editing which is thrust into the middle of the biography. For the matter of the book, it is what might be expected from a man who understands his subject without loving it, and whose chief object is to upset Mr. Froude. The narrative is accurate; the references are highly valuable. The author does his best to be fair, and rejects all the more vulgar calumnies against his victim;—for, unlike most biographies, this of Mr. Robertson has no *hero*. But Mr. Robertson sees everything through the coloured glass

of the English Review. He is utterly incapable of entering into the position of either a king or an archbishop of the twelfth century. Above all, Thomas of Canterbury, whether saint or not, was emphatically a hero, and a hero is just the sort of person whom Canon Robertson cannot possibly understand.

Of the foreign writers on the subject, we must confess with shame that we know less than we ought. Reuter's History of Alexander the Third is frequently quoted by Dean Milman and Mr. Robertson; and, as it seems to be highly favourable to that Pontiff, we suppose we ought in fairness to have mastered it, for certainly our own study of the Thomaic correspondence does not lead us to a conclusion at all like what we take M. Reuter's to be. M. Ozanam's *Deux Chanceliers d'Angleterre* (Paris, 1836), and M. Buss's *Der Heilige Thomas und sein Kampf für die Freiheit der Kirche* (Mainz, 1856), we only heard of through Mr. Robertson's references. M. Ozanam's book we have not seen; M. Buss's has reached us since we began to write this article, and we have had time only to glance at it. It is easy to see that M. Buss is a strong Catholic and partisan of Thomas, but we do not see anything of the offensive ostentation of Catholicism of which we complain in Mr. Morris. His research and labour are unwearied, and, as far as we have seen, his work seems to be the best suited of all to serve as a guide to the original writers. But there are some tasks before which even German industry breaks down, or at least which it cannot go through without complaining. M. Buss complains, not indeed with the sarcastic rhetoric of Mr. Robertson, but with a simple pathos which is quite as effective, of the superhuman difficulty of finding anything he wants in a book edited by Dr. Giles.

We will now turn from modern writers on the subject to the original authorities for the Life of Thomas. These are of three kinds,—the biographers, the contemporary chroniclers, and the correspondence of Thomas, Gilbert, and the rest. All our authorities are in Latin, except a single very

important biography in French verse. English records we unluckily have none. The Saxon Chronicle breaks off at the accession of Henry the Second. What would one not have given to have seen this stirring period described, with the same life as the days of the Conqueror and of Stephen, by a real native Englishman, in the old Teutonic mother-tongue?

The French Life of Garnier of Pont Sainte-Maxence must be the earliest of all, as the author tells us it was written between 1172 and 1174, being completed within four years after the martyrdom. The author had himself seen the saint in the flesh, but before he assumed his saintly character:

> "En Gascuingne fu-il lung tens pur guerreier.
> As Gascuns i kovint de lur chasteus lesser.
> En Normendie r'out sun seinur grant mester,
> *Et jo l'vi sor Franceis plusur feiz chevaucher.*"*

He visited Canterbury, and also conversed with Thomas's sister, Mary, Abbess of Barking, so that he had good sources of knowledge; and he tells us that, in the course of writing his book, he often altered what he had written, as he obtained better information. Besides direct narrative, the book contains many digressions or versified sermons; he has also taken the trouble to translate several of the more important letters into his French verse, and a very odd effect they have in their new shape. This biography is very important from its early date, and to the philologer it is highly valuable as a specimen of the French language in the twelfth century.

Of the Latin Lives the most important are those of Edward Grim, Roger of Pontigny, William Fitz-Stephen, Alan of Tewkesbury, and Herbert of Bosham, together with the short Life by John of Salisbury prefixed to that of Alan. All these writers were contemporary, and were intimate with the Archbishop at some portion or other of his career. Each therefore tells part at least of his story from his own

* Garnier, p. 14, ed. Hippeau.

personal knowledge. Each, to a great extent, fills up the deficiencies of the others. Thus Edward Grim only entered the service of Thomas a few days before his death; his earlier narrative is therefore written from hearsay; but, in his new-born zeal for his master, he gives a full and vivid account of his martyrdom: of that martyrdom indeed he was more than a spectator; he was actually a fellow-sufferer, having his arm broken in a vain attempt to defend the Archbishop. Roger was the attendant of Thomas during his sojourn at Pontigny. We might have expected him to be very full on that part of his history; but, writing doubtless mainly for the monks of Pontigny, he says that he will not enlarge upon what every one knows, and cuts that part very short. He therefore writes mainly from hearsay, but it is from the hearsay of Thomas himself; so that we may look upon Roger's work as being more nearly an autobiography than any of the others. William Fitz-Stephen seems to have been attached to Thomas earlier than any of the rest. He was his clerk when Chancellor, and consequently gives us many details of that time of his life which are not to be found elsewhere. He did not follow the Archbishop into exile, though he had one interview with him in the course of a journey through France; but he was present at the martyrdom. Hence he can tell us little from his own knowledge of his master's doings in banishment, but he supplies many valuable particulars of what was going on in England meanwhile. Herbert of Bosham, on the other hand, followed Thomas through his whole career both in England and France, but he was not present at the martyrdom, and he seems to have known very little of his early life. He is therefore the fullest of all in his biography of the Archbishop, but tells us very little of the Chancellor. Alan, and the fragmentary Life by William of Canterbury in Dr. Giles's second volume, also contain occasional particulars not to be found elsewhere.

The comparison of these biographies with one another is

exceedingly curious and interesting. We fully agree with Mr. Robertson that they need to be more closely analyzed and compared than they have ever yet been, "with a view of ascertaining their correspondences and divergences, and the sources from which each writer derived his materials." Mr. Robertson goes on to say, rather darkly, "Perhaps the result of such an inquiry might be found to throw some light on questions connected with a *Historia Quadripartita* far more important than that which is devoted to the Life of Thomas of Canterbury." This we take to be Canon Robertson's roundabout way of describing the Four Gospels. The hint is an excellent one, especially as coming from so orthodox a source, though it is very likely that some inquirers might push it to results at which Mr. Robertson might be rather alarmed. The general character of the narratives is that of close agreement in the main story, combined with constant contradiction in minute particulars. This is just what might be expected from narratives written from memory some years after the event. Herbert, for instance, did not write till fourteen years after the martyrdom. He speaks rather pathetically of himself as the last survivor of the whole band of faithful disciples.* On the other hand, there is not uncommonly a minute, sometimes even a verbal, agreement between two or more narrators, as if they had copied from one another, or from some common source. Take, for instance, one grand scene in Thomas's life, his "fighting with beasts" at Northampton. Two at least of our authorities, Herbert and William Fitz-Stephen, were there. Yet if a man were to try to force even their narratives into exact conformity, as commentators do with Mr. Robertson's other *Historia Quadripartita*, he would utterly break down in the attempt. Comparing all the narratives, there is a good deal of difference in the order of events, and even as to the mouth into which particular speeches are put. But in the whole history we only remember one contradiction of any real moment. William

* Giles, vii. 335.

Fitz-Stephen says that Thomas did affix his seal to the Constitutions of Clarendon, which is stated by no one else, and which the rest implicitly deny. Here we confess is a difficulty. William was something of a lawyer, and seems always careful about legal technicalities, so his testimony is especially valuable. But it has to be set against a *consensus* of the other writers and the general tenour of the story. Whether Thomas did or did not seal the Constitutions is of real importance to the history, and it is strange that any of his followers should be careless or misinformed about it; but the slighter diversities which elsewhere lie thick upon the narrative are just what always happen to several unassisted human narrators telling the same story. No reader of the Life of Thomas is likely to be troubled at discrepancies of this sort; but exactly similar ones in the other *Historia Quadripartita* have given no small trouble to tender consciences. Each biographer of Thomas, like each of the Evangelists, has a character of his own. Edward Grim has the greatest tendency to the marvellous; Roger, as a Frenchman, is far more bitter against Henry than any of the rest, and he makes just those little mistakes about English matters which a Frenchman would make in any age. William Fitz-Stephen is lively and amusing; Herbert is given to sermonizing and twaddling, and to putting long speeches, not only into his own mouth (which is his own affair), but into the mouths of Thomas and others, which we trust and believe are Master Herbert's own composition. But even this is no more than every historian gave himself the license of doing till very recent times. Herbert is moreover the Boanerges of our story. He seems to have been the double of Thomas in mind and body, and probably did Thomas very little good by his constant company. As if the Primate were not of himself daring and unyielding enough in all conscience, Herbert was always stirring him up to the strongest measures. Like Thomas, he did not fear the face of man, and spoke as boldly to King Henry on his throne as to his own master in his chamber. Like Thomas

too he was tall of stature and goodly of countenance; and like Thomas in his unregenerate state, he did not object to set off his bodily perfections to the best advantage.* These two faithful followers appear in their several characters in that most striking scene at Northampton.† Thomas sits with his cross in his hand, defying the King of earth in the name of the King of Heaven. Herbert, the true Boanerges, would fain have him excommunicate every man present on the spot. William counsels meekness and patience. Forbidden to speak to his master, he points in silence to the figure of the crucified Saviour. Even the cold heart of Mr. Robertson forbears to sneer at this most touching incident.

Besides these biographies by writers whose names and actions we know, there is a very remarkable one printed in Dr. Giles's second volume, from an anonymous manuscript in the Library at Lambeth Palace. The author affirms that he was present at the martyrdom; still his contemporary character is doubted by some modern writers. If it were fully ascertained, the work would be most valuable; for, though it does not contain many new facts, it is written in a tone of unusually independent criticism, and has fewer coincidences with other Lives than any one in the series. It states the case for Henry and against Thomas with great fulness and fairness, and enters into arguments at some length against those who denied the Archbishop's claims to the title of martyr.

As for contemporary chroniclers, who wrote, not special Lives of Saint Thomas, but general annals of their own times, several of the best of the class have recorded the reign of Henry the Second. These of course are highly valuable, as giving us the view of affairs taken by those who were not Thomas's immediate followers, and also as helping us to the more exact chronology of the period. The biographers are commonly rather careless as to the order of time. Each, as we have seen, recorded what

* William Fitz-Stephen, Giles, i. 265. † Ib. i. 226.

struck him most or what he best knew; one set down one event and another another; and none of them paid much regard to the order of details. The chroniclers step in to correct their errors and supply their deficiencies. Ralph de Diceto, Dean of Saint Paul's, a moderate partisan of the King's, supplies in his *Imagines Historiarum* several important facts not in the biographies, together with the chronological arrangement of all. Gervase and Roger of Hoveden were also contemporaries: but they were younger men, who wrote after the biographers, whom they continually copy. But it is always curious to see which Life they follow for any particular fact, and they also often add touches and details of their own. Gervase especially, as a Canterbury monk admitted by Thomas himself, had good means of information. William of Newburgh is chiefly remarkable for the manly and independent tone with which he treats the whole controversy, doing full justice to the originally honest motives of both the King and the Primate, but not scrupling to deal severe censure on particular actions of both.

The Letters of course are invaluable; at least they will be when any one shall be found to edit them decently. For the whole of Thomas's sojourn in France, they, much more than the biographers, are really the history. Many of the letters are strictly public documents, and many others, though private in form, were meant at least for the eyes of all the writer's own party. Mr. Robertson thinks the correspondence does not give a favourable idea of the time, and that it is on the whole discreditable to the mediæval Church. That the letters are full of strong language is no more than was to be expected; but we do not know that Saint Thomas and his contemporaries use any stronger language than those worthies of the sixteenth century whom doubtless Mr. Robertson, as a sound Protestant, duly reverences. If Thomas is rather fond of calling Geoffrey Riddell *Archidiabolus* instead of *Archidiaconus*, was it not the established joke of the Reformation to call a Bishop a *Bitesheep*, and to

turn *Cardinal Poole* into *Carnal Fool*? In short, in ages when decorum was not very stringent, all men who have been in earnest, from the Prophets and Apostles downwards, have used very strong language upon occasion. But Mr. Robertson's taste is so delicate that he is actually offended by Thomas's hearty, honest, and thoroughly English denunciations of the iniquities of the Roman Court. These we suspect, in anybody but Saint Thomas of Canterbury, he would have hailed as an instance of Protestantism before its time. But he has weightier accusations still against the unfortunate Letters. They are he thinks full of "cant," and of "strange tossing to and fro of Scripture, perverted by allegory and misapplication."* In a certain sense this is true; but talk of this sort always reminds us very strongly of the doctrine taught us by Mr. Grote, that all religions seem absurd to those who do not believe them. Most undoubtedly a calm and critical reader of those Hebrew and Greek writings which we call Scripture will find constant "misapplications" and strange "tossings to and fro" in the writings of Thomas, his friends, and his enemies. But he will find misapplications and tossings equally strange in any sermon, any religious tract, any religious biography, of our own times. In their belief, as in that of the Protestant enthusiasts of the seventeenth century, every word of the Old and New Testament was written for the direct example and instruction of every man of every age. Believing this, they did not shrink from carrying it out in detail. If God spake unto Moses, why should He not speak also to Anselm or Bernard? If He bade Joshua lead His people against the Canaanite, did He not also bid Peter the Hermit to preach the crusade against the Saracen? If the destroying angel smote the host of Sennacherib before Jerusalem, was the arm of the Lord to be shortened when the schismatic Frederick threw up his banks and shot his arrows against the tomb and temple of the Prince of the Apostles? The faith of those

* P. 173.

times was at least a real, living, practical, faith; professing to believe certain books as their rule of faith and their personal guide of life, they did believe them as such. Consistently, at all events, they shrank from no "misapplication," no "strange tossing to and fro," of what they held to be real lively oracles, speaking direct comfort and counsel in every circumstance of the life of every man.

We however fully agree with Mr. Robertson in placing the letters of John of Salisbury far higher than any others in the collection. John was a thoroughly good and pious man, and withal learned, thoughtful, moderate, and prudent. A firm friend and faithful follower of Thomas, he rebukes him, whenever he thinks him in the wrong, with apostolic boldness; down to the very day of his death,* he withstands him to the face as often as he is to be blamed. We have no hesitation in setting down John as a wiser and better man than Thomas himself. But does not Mr. Robertson see that it speaks very much in Thomas's favour to have attracted and retained the devoted attachment of such a man? A really candid writer would have pointed out that if John's bold and faithful rebukes tell greatly to his honour, they tell almost equally to the honour of Thomas, who invariably took them in good part.

In a similar spirit elsewhere Mr. Robertson exhibits an amount of delight and triumph altogether childish, in pointing out the error of "certain writers" who had not put the events connected with the excommunication at Vezelay and the removal from Pontigny in their right order. The "certain writers" seem to be Dr. Lingard, and perhaps Dr. Giles and Mr. Froude. We are not greatly concerned for them; but when Mr. Robertson ventures to say† that the original biographers "wished to falsify the history," that is quite another matter. The case is this. In 1166 Thomas went from Pontigny to Vezelay, and there, in discharge of legatine powers with which he had been lately invested by the Pope, he excommunicated,

* Rog. Pont. ap. Giles, i. 164; Ben. Petr., ibid. ii. 62. † P. 193.

with especial solemnity, several of the King's friends, both clerical and lay, for various offences, and uttered a solemn warning against Henry himself. Him also he had intended to excommunicate, but forebore doing so on hearing that he was dangerously ill. On hearing of this proceeding, Henry, by violent threats against the whole Cistercian order, procured the removal of Thomas from the Cistercian abbey of Pontigny, where he had hitherto been sheltered. The comment of an impartial historian would be, that the Archbishop's conduct was violent and imprudent, the King's revenge mean and cowardly. Unfortunately it happens that not one of the biographers, except the anonymous Lambeth writer, describes this scene in all its fulness. The complete account of the matter has to be made out from the chroniclers and the Letters. That most of the biographers do not mention it is really not very wonderful. Edward Grim was not there, and his whole narrative of this part of Thomas's life is utterly meagre. Roger of Pontigny cuts his almost as short, because his brethren knew all about it. William Fitz-Stephen was not there; he tells us chiefly what happened in Henry's dominions. Herbert was there, and records the scene; he does not indeed directly mention the excommunication; but this is clearly because the warning against the King was the most striking point, that which he found most vividly impressed on his mind eighteen years after. For an Archbishop of Canterbury to suspend a disobedient bishop, and excommunicate a schismatic dean and a sacrilegious layman, was no very wonderful occurrence. The awful and unexpected part of the proceedings was, when Thomas arose, with a voice broken with tears,* to warn the King of England that, if he did not repent, excommunication should fall upon him as well as upon inferior sinners. That

* "Confestim, omnibus audientibus et stupentibus, miro motu compunctus voce quidem flebili et intentissimo compassionis affectu in ipsum Anglorum regem Henricum nominative comminatorium emisit edictum." Herb., ap. Giles, vii. 230.

Herbert had no intention of concealing the far less important fact of the excommunication and suspension appears from his speaking directly of them in the very next page.* So equally does William Fitz-Stephen,† though without strict regard to chronology, he being more intent on the reception of the excommunications in England than on their first denunciation in Burgundy. In short, if Mr. Robertson enjoys crowing over Dr. Lingard, we have not the least wish to interfere with his enjoyment; but he has not the slightest right to repeat the note of triumph over any one of Thomas's original biographers.

We must now turn from the ancient and modern biographers of Thomas to the estimate which we have ourselves formed of Thomas himself. If we can trust ourselves, that estimate is not swayed by party considerations of any kind. We do not feel ourselves bound to indiscriminate worship because of a papal canonization; but we do not look on such papal canonization as at all taking away a claim to honour when honour is due. And be it remembered that it was not only the Roman Chancery, but the spontaneous voice of the English nation which raised Thomas to the honours of saintship. Through his whole archiepiscopal career, alike in England and in France, Thomas was the darling of the people. One of his biographers is almost content to rest his claims to reverence on the adage, familiar then as now, that the voice of the people is the voice of God.‡ When he "fought with beasts" at Northampton, when his king accused him, when barons condemned him and bishops deserted him, an admiring multitude followed him in triumph from the castle-gate to his lodgings at Saint Andrew's. When he turned away from the conference at Montmirail, when every earthly power seemed to have forsaken him, every eye as he passed was fixed in admiration on the Primate who "would not deny the honour of God for the face of two kings." His return from banishment, his reception

* Giles, vii. 231. † Ib. i. 258. ‡ Lamb., ap. Giles, ii. 136.

at Sandwich, at Canterbury, and at London, was a nobler triumph than ever awaited returning conqueror. The bells, the organs, the processions of monks and clergy, might have expressed a mere constrained or official homage; but there could have been nothing of such compulsion in the voice with which, in defiance of hostile nobles and officials, all Kent and all London poured forth to bless him who came back to them in the name of the Lord, the father of the orphans and the judge of the widows.* Such popular reverence does not prove that the cause which he defended was one which the sober voice of history will permanently approve. It does not prove that his own character may not have been disfigured by many and grievous faults. But it is a homage which assuredly was never paid to a mere proud and ambitious hypocrite, or to the assertor of a cause which was at the time palpably that of unrighteousness or oppression.

Nor must we suppose that the popularity of Thomas in his own day was at all the popularity of an assertor of the cause of the "Saxon" against the Norman. This is a mere dream, to which an unlucky currency has been given by the eloquent writing of Thierry. There is no trace in the history of the period of any such strongly marked antagonism as Thierry supposes still to have existed; still less is there any trace of Thomas of London being its impersonation, if it did exist. Thomas, in reality, was himself of Norman descent. His family was settled in London at the time of his birth; but his father was originally from Rouen, while his mother seems actually to have been born at Caen.† It is evident however that at the time of his birth his family was thoroughly established in England, and that they had the feelings, not of strangers, but of Englishmen and Londoners. The truth is that there is not a word about "Saxons and Normans," or any controversies between them, in any one contemporary biographer, chronicler,

* "Pater orphanorum et judex viduarum." Herb., ap. Giles, vii. 315.

† Lamb., ap. Giles, ii. 73.

or letter-writer. The whole evidence seems to us to show that the wide distinction and hostility between the two races, supposed by Thierry and his school to have remained so late as the reign of Henry the Second, is a mere imagination. The probability is that, though the upper classes were mainly of Norman, the lower of Old-English descent, the distinction had then become one merely of class, and not of nation. In the middle class, Thomas's own class, the two races must have been much mixed up together. Indeed the Conquest itself must have had the highly beneficial effect of at once forming a middle class out of the higher ranks of the conquered people. The Norman gentleman, born in England, often of an English mother, would soon feel himself much more English than Norman. The Norman citizen, Gilbert Becket or his father, would do so still sooner. In truth, mankind are everywhere far more sensible of birth than of descent, and they identify themselves with the country where they were born, rather than with the country of their fathers. We are sometimes led to suppose that the feeling of race lasted longer than it did because the kings remained foreign so long. Henry the Second was not an Englishman, he was not even a Norman; he was a great French prince, who reigned in France, and treated England as a dependency. To his English subjects he was the *rex transmarinus*,* the king beyond the sea, who sometimes visited them, but who commonly dwelt in more favoured parts of his dominions. Twice in his reign he seems to have wished to confine his own immediate government to his French territories, and to convert England into the formal state of a viceroyalty. Such, if we may believe the Lambeth biographer,† was actually his object in pressing the election of Thomas to the archbishopric. Henry was to reign in France and Thomas in England. And afterwards it was clearly with the same object that he procured the coronation of his son

* William Fitz-Stephen, ap. Giles, i, 284, 289, 294.

† Ap. Giles, ii. 86: cf. Garnier (et Freteval), 152.

as a *rex cismarinus* during his lifetime. Those whom he, and the kings before and after him, advanced by preference to high office were neither "Anglo-Saxons" nor "Anglo-Normans," but absolute foreigners, natives of the Continent. This is especially to be seen in ecclesiastical promotions. Thomas is always said to have been the first Englishman who became Archbishop of Canterbury since the Conquest; it might have been added that he was nearly the first Englishman who became bishop of any see. This is perfectly true. He was the first native of England, of either race, who rose to the metropolitan throne; while his predecessors, and the greater number of the contemporary bishops, were natives of the continent. It is probably this ambiguous expression of "Englishman" which led M. Thierry into the mistake of looking on Thomas as an "Anglo-Saxon" patriot. The real phænomenon of the age is not the struggle between the two races in England, but the fusing together of the two races preparatory to the struggle with a royal line foreign to both. This silent, gradual, fusing of "Saxons and Normans," is recorded by no chronicler, just because it was so silent and gradual. But we see it plainly enough in its results. It was the great work of the twelfth century. It is this work which gives that century that peculiar character of which we have already spoken. No process could be more important, more necessary to all that was to come after. But its silent, hidden, nature is alone enough to give a sort of isolated and unintelligible character to the outward aspect of the age.

Of this fusion Thomas, the son of Gilbert Becket of London, may be taken as the type. Though of Norman blood, his whole feeling, his whole character, is English; and it is clear that no man in England looked upon him as a stranger. His general character in mind and in body stands vividly forth in his own letters and in the descriptions of his biographers. The man of majestic presence and of unyielding soul at once rises up before us. Saint

Thomas of Canterbury was indeed a "muscular Christian" with a vengeance. Of strength and stature beyond the common lot of men; with a quick ear, a keen eye, a fluent speech; cheerful in discourse and ready in debate; foremost in the mimic warfare of the chase and on the actual field of battle,—such was Thomas the Chancellor. And scourge and fast and sackcloth did but little to change the essential character of Thomas the Archbishop. The weapons of his warfare alone are changed. Of old he stormed the strongest castles, and unhorsed the stoutest knights in single combat. He laughed at the scruples of his sovereign which kept him back from assailing his liege lord King Lewis within the walls of Toulouse. The saint clearly took exactly the same delight in wielding his spiritual arms. He writhed under the timid and time-serving counsels of Pope and Cardinals, who kept back the sword of Peter from the slaughter. And yet this man, so ardent and headstrong, must have been, at both times of his life, amongst the most amiable and delightful of companions. The intense love with which he inspired his immediate followers breathes in every page of their writings. It is alike in the neophyte Edward Grim, in the fellow-exile Herbert, and in his earlier follower William Fitz-Stephen, who seems hardly to know which most to admire, the magnificent Chancellor or the martyred Archbishop. Nor did he awaken less attachment among men of other ways and callings. All their disputes could never quite efface the old friendship from the heart either of Henry or of Thomas. At every personal meeting the unextinguished love breaks out again, if only for one brief moment. Henry, there can be little doubt, was kept up to his opposition by men who hated Thomas far more than he did. The bishops, even the better ones, for the most part disliked him from their natural repugnance to see a man of his early life and conversation so strangely exalted over their heads. Ruffians like the De Brocs were actuated by the motives common to men of their stamp in all ages. The higher and better class of the laity,

men like the Earls of Arundel and Leicester, oppose Thomas with deep sorrow, and in every respect exhibit a favourable contrast to the bishops on the King's side. The love and the hatred of Thomas were passions of intense depth, and he could call out both feelings in others in as great intensity as he felt them himself.

The intellect of Thomas was clearly one ranking very high in the second order of genius. He was not a creator. We should look in vain to him for anything original or comprehensive. He could never have left any such impress upon his age as did Hildebrand among popes, or Charles the Great among kings. His great qualities were an ardent and impetuous spirit, a practical energy which carried everything before him, an admirable versatility which could adapt itself to all circumstances and all people, and a lofty sense of duty which could support him under any amount of adversity and disappointment. His faults were chiefly the exaggeration of his virtues. His impetuosity often grew into needless and injudicious violence; his strong will continually degenerated into obstinacy. His biographers praise him for uniting the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. We must confess that we can see in him very little of either dove or serpent; their other favourite quotation of "the righteous man bold as a lion," is very much more to the purpose. His enemies have accused him of pride and of duplicity. Doubtless he magnified his office to the extremest point; his long brooding over his wrongs at Sens and Pontigny imbued him with a fanatical spirit, and an overdone, almost frantic, longing for martyrdom. Yet how far the personal exaltation of Thomas of London was still thought of in procuring the triumph of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Legate of the Holy See, it is not for mortals to presume to judge. The charge of duplicity, which we are sorry to see brought on one occasion by so weighty a writer as Dean Milman, is, we think, without foundation. The faults of Thomas were the natural faults of his lofty and impetuous character, the

faults of obstinacy and violence. But duplicity, conscious bad faith, was utterly alien to his nature. Once, possibly twice, in his life—certainly at Clarendon, perhaps also at Montmirail—he allowed himself to be talked over into conduct which he did not thoroughly approve. He repented; he drew back; in a certain sense he violated his promise; but he was not guilty of any deliberate deception. His conduct may be called either vacillating or obstinate, two qualities quite consistent with one another; it may be called over-scrupulous; it certainly was provoking and offensive; but we do not think it fairly deserves the name of double-dealing.

The whole character of Thomas strikes us as essentially secular. He was made for the court and the camp, not for the cathedral or the cloister. His episcopacy and his saintship strike us as mistakes. There was not a particle of hypocrisy in him; but the whole of his saintly career was artificial, unnatural, and overdone. His misfortune was to be born in an age, and in a class, to which the Church alone offered means of advancement. His first great advancement was indeed secular; he was a statesman and a soldier, not a priest; but, strangely enough, it was only his ecclesiastical character which allowed him to become a statesman and a soldier. His parentage was respectable, but no more; he was himself in no way ashamed of his descent, but it is clear that it was humble enough to be used as a means of disparagement by his enemies. The son of Gilbert Becket of London would, as a mere layman, have had little chance of presiding in the King's Chancery or of commanding the King's armies. Once tonsured, secular as well as ecclesiastical greatness was open to him. As Chancellor he nearly cast off his clerical character. Strict men condemned the secular pomp of the great courtier and captain who was also Archdeacon of Canterbury and Provost of Beverley. But two things are to be remembered: first of all, he was not a priest. Loaded with preferment which now no deacon could hold, the terror of King Lewis and counsellor of King

Henry remained ecclesiastically in that lowly order. A fighting archdeacon was a scandal, though Edward Grim seems to have thought otherwise; but the conduct of Thomas did not present the far greater scandal of a priest, one invested with the mysterious powers of sacrifice and absolution, casting off his spiritual character like Cæsar Borgia or Talleyrand. In modern estimation the difference between a priest and a deacon seems very slight; but, when once the full sacerdotal ideal is realized, it becomes something infinite. Secondly, though Thomas as Chancellor led a thoroughly secular life, he did not lead either an irreligious or an immoral one. Looked on as a layman, he might almost, even then, have passed for a saint. That he already bared his back to the discipline does not prove very much, as Henry himself now and then did the same. But it is no small credit that a man, whose order debarred him from marriage, should, in a profligate court, have strictly preserved his personal chastity. How far he rebuked the King's vices we know not, but he resisted many strong temptations to share in them, and he was a severe censor of inferior offenders in the same line. At last came the moment of the great change. Thomas the Chancellor-Archdeacon is converted into Thomas the Archbishop. We have every reason to believe that the appointment was against his own wishes. He was as great as he could be in the line which best suited his powers, and he felt no desire to adventure himself in a line for which he must then at least have felt himself less fitted. He warned his master that, once Archbishop, he should be sure to lose his favour.* But Henry insisted on the appointment, and Thomas was ordained priest, and elected and consecrated Primate of all England.

And now came that great change by which, in the language of his biographers, he became another man. Was the change miraculous? Was it hypocritical? Or shall we say with Mr. Froude that there was no sudden

* Herb. vii. 26: cf. Rog. i. 108; Will. Fitz-Steph. i. 193; Alan, i. 322.

change at all? To us it seems merely the natural result of change of circumstances in a man of Thomas's character. He was not a man to do any thing by halves; whatever master he served he served to the uttermost. As the servant of the King he was the most faithful of Chancellors; as the servant of the Church he would be the most faithful of Bishops. One at least of his biographers seems to have quite understood* what is really no very wonderful phænomenon. Thomas was in all things a man of his own age; we never find him rising above it or sinking below it. He accepted without hesitation the current notion of a saintly prelate, and endeavoured to carry it out in his own person. The ideal ecclesiastic of his times was one who united the loftiest hierarchical pretensions with the most unbounded liberality and the severest personal mortifications. Into this ideal Thomas threw himself with characteristic fervour. His perfect sincerity no man can doubt who has studied at once human nature and the records of the time. But the change, though perfectly sincere, was still artificial; his saintship never sat quite easily upon him; with the zeal of a new convert he overdid matters. We at once see the difference between him and those holy personages whose sanctity has been the sanctity of a whole life, or those again who have been suddenly turned from notorious sinners into contrite-hearted penitents. Nor was he one of the class of great ecclesiastical statesmen to whom the Church has been through life as a fatherland or a political party. Had Thomas belonged to any one of those classes, he would have been somewhat more chary of his spiritual thunders. But his artificial frame of mind allowed no scope either for the long-suffering of Anselm or for the policy of Hildebrand. His fiery soul would have revolted

* "Siquidem quum ante promotionem suam tanquam unus excellentium enituisset seculo, non minus etiam postmodum inter præcipuos orthodoxorum eminere studuit militans Christo. Nesciebat enim nisi maximorum unus esse quemcumque sortitus esset ordinem vitæ." Will. Cant., ap. Giles, ii. 130.

against either as remissness in the cause of God. Thomas could be meek and gentle after a sort, yet always only by an effort; himself personally he could humble, as he did to his censor John of Salisbury; but the rights of his office, the cause of the Church, were never to be humbled by him. Throughout his life the garb of saintship never fitted him. Through his whole career the old Adam is perpetually peeping out: we see the spirit of former days when he tells his slanderer at Northampton that, were he a knight, his sword should assert his righteousness; when he is detected on the Flemish coast by his eye fixed on the hawk on the young noble's wrist; when, even in his last hour, after years of scourging and penance, the strong arm which had unhorsed Engelram de Trie threw Reginald Fitz-Urse prostrate upon the pavement of the cathedral. It peeps out in less excusable form in those words of reviling, rather than rebuke, from which he could not restrain himself even in the hour of confessorship and of martyrdom.* Had his early life been one of deeper sinfulness, his conversion might have brought a more chastened and truly mortified spirit to the service of his Maker. But a saintship artificial, though thoroughly sincere, had always something awkward and incongruous about it. If the Church really needed a champion, the lion-heart of Thomas was certainly less fitted for the office than the true union of dove and serpent to be found in his friend and monitor John of Salisbury.

Our estimate of Thomas's personal character ought not to be at all affected by modern notions, however well founded, as to the abstract justice of the cause which he maintained. The immunity of clerks from the jurisdiction of the civil power would now be justly considered monstrous in every well-governed country. All that is wanted is to show that it was a cause which might be honestly maintained in the twelfth century. And that it

* "Garcionem et spurium" (Will. Cant., ap. Giles, ii. 13) at Northampton. "Lenonem appellans" at Canterbury (E. Grim, ap. Giles, i. 76).

surely was. Thomas did not invent the ecclesiastical claims; he merely defended them as he found them. Even if the "Customs" were, which seems very doubtful, the established laws of the land, they were laws which a churchman of those days could at most submit to in patience, and could not be expected to approve or subscribe to. None of his fellow-bishops loved the Constitutions of Clarendon any better than Thomas did; they simply submitted through fear, some of them at least clearly against their own judgement. The most violent attack on Thomas ever penned, the famous letter of Gilbert Foliot,* does not blame the Archbishop for resisting the King, but for not resisting him more strenuously. And we must remember that, if the so-called liberties of the Church were utterly repugnant to our notions of settled government, they did not appear equally so in those times. The modern idea of government is an equal system of law for every part of the territory and for every class of the nation. In the middle ages every class of men, every district, every city, tried to isolate itself within a jurisprudence of its own. Nobles, burghers, knights of orders, wherever either class was strong enough, refused the jurisdiction of any but their own peers. Every town tried to approach as nearly as it could to the condition of a separate republic. A province thought itself privileged if it could obtain a judicial system separate from the rest of the kingdom. Even within the ecclesiastical pale we find peculiar jurisdictions: orders, monasteries, chapters, colleges, shake off the authority of the regular ordinaries, and substitute some exceptional tribunal of their own. For the clergy to be amenable only to a clerical judicature was really nothing very monstrous in such a state of things. It was of course defended on totally different grounds from any other exemption; but it could hardly have arisen except in a state of things when exemptions of all kinds were familiar. And we must also remember

* Ep. Gilb. Fol., ap. Giles, v. 272.

that ecclesiastical privileges were not so exclusively priestly privileges as we sometimes fancy. They sheltered not only ordained ministers, but all ecclesiastical officers of every kind; the Church courts also claimed jurisdiction in the causes of widows and orphans.* In short, the privileges for which Thomas contended transferred a large part of the people, and that the most helpless part, from the bloody grasp of the King's courts to the milder jurisdiction of the Bishop. The ecclesiastical judicature was clearly inadequate to deal with the most serious class of offences; but, on the other hand, it did not, like that of the royal courts, visit petty thefts or assaults with such monstrous penalties as blinding and castration.† One of the Constitutions of Clarendon, that which forbade the ordination of villains without the consent of their lords, was directly aimed at the only means by which the lowest class in the state could rise. And this constitution did not, as Dean Milman says,‡ pass unheeded; on the contrary, it called forth an indignant burst of almost democratic sentiment from the French biographer of Thomas.§

But while we do justice to Thomas, we must also do justice to Henry. Foreigner as he was, careless of special English interests, and stained as his life was by vices and faults of various kinds, Henry had still many of the qualities of a great ruler, and we have no reason to doubt that he was sincerely desirous for the good government of his kingdom. The civil wars of Stephen's reign had left England in a state of utter anarchy. This state of things King Henry and Chancellor Thomas set themselves to work in good earnest to undo. Their government did much to

* See the letter of John of Poitiers, Giles, Ep. Gilb. Fol. vi. 238.

† See a most curious story in Benedict's Miracles of Saint Thomas, pp. 184–193. On the cruelty of the royal jurisprudence, see Herb. vii. 105.

‡ Lat. Christ. iii. 465.

§ "'Fils à vilains ne fust en nul liu ordenez
Sanz l'otrei sur seignur de cui terre il fu nez.'
Et Deus à sun servise nus a tuz apelez!
Mielz valt fils a vilain qui est preuz et senez,
Que ne feit gentilz hum failliz et debutez." *Garnier*, p. 89.

restore order and peace; but it is easy to see that, to restore perfect order and peace, no class of men must be allowed to break the law with the certainty of an inadequate punishment. Thomas's own admirers state Henry's case very fairly, and do full justice to his motives.* Herbert himself goes so far as to say that King and Archbishop alike had a zeal for God, and leaves it to God Himself to judge which zeal was according to knowledge.† No doubt both Henry and Thomas saw the evil, and each set himself vigorously to correct it in his own way. The number of clerical offenders was large, and some of their offences were very serious. Thomas, during the short time that he lived in England as Archbishop, certainly did his best to strike at the root of the evil by unusual care as to those whom he ordained; and he also passed severe sentences, though of course not of life or limb, upon the offenders whom he sheltered from the royal vengeance. Still there can be no doubt that there were a good many churchmen in the kingdom for whom the gallows was the only appropriate remedy. Henry had a noble career before him, had he but adhered steadily to his own principles. The only danger was, that the full carrying out of those principles would have led to consequences which in the twelfth century would have been altogether premature. They involved, not only the subjection of the clergy to the ordinary jurisdiction, but the throwing off of all dependence upon the see of Rome. This noble, but perhaps impracticable, cause Henry wilfully threw away. He let the contest degenerate from a strife of principles into a petty personal persecution of the Archbishop. In the scene at Clarendon we see the clashing of two causes, both of which contained elements of right. In the scene at Northampton we see only a series of mean and malignant attempts to crush a man who had become offensive and dangerous. Henry was now the tyrant and Thomas the hero. By allowing his

* See Herb., ap. Giles, vii. 102, 122; Ann. Lamb. ii. 85, 86.

† Herb. vii. 108, 109.

Bishops to appeal to the Pope, by appealing to the Pope himself, Henry gave up his own cause. Nor did he mend it when he recognized the Pope as arbiter whenever he thought him favourable, but, whenever he turned against him, denounced savage penalties on all who should introduce any papal letters into the kingdom. Henry, at the beginning at least, appears as the statesman of wider and clearer vision; but Thomas deserves the higher moral praise of sticking firmly and manfully to the principles which he conscientiously believed to be right.

And now for a few words on the closing scene. As usual, we find a heroic firmness, a lofty sense of right, mixed up with circumstances detracting from the purely saintly ideal. We admire rather than approve. We hold Thomas to have been highly blameworthy in returning to England amidst a storm of censures and excommunications; so did many of his wisest contemporaries. An amnesty on such a triumphal return would have been naturally expected from a secular conqueror; much more would it have become a minister of peace victorious in a bloodless struggle. But in the state of fanatic exaltation into which Thomas had now wrought himself, lenity would have seemed a crime which would incur the curse of Meroz; to have failed to smite the contumacious prelates would have been failing to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The quarrel in itself was not so frivolous an one as it seems in these days. The ancient right of the Primate of Canterbury to crown the English King seems to us a mere honorary privilege; it was a very different matter when a king was no king till he was crowned and anointed. And in the actual choice put before him, no one can wish that Thomas had chosen otherwise than he did. "Absolve the prelates; fly, or die." He would not fly; he had fled once; he would not again desert his church. As for the absolution, he was probably canonically right in saying that the Pope alone could pronounce it; but a conditional absolution he did offer. Now, whether the sentence was just or unjust, wise

or foolish, no public officer, Bishop, Judge, or any other, could be justified in withdrawing a solemn and regular judgement in answer to the bidding and threats of four ruffians armed with no sort of legal authority. To have absolved the bishops through fear of the words of Tracy and Fitz-Urse would have been unworthy cowardice indeed. That Thomas showed a most unhealthy craving after martyrdom cannot be denied; but a martyr he clearly was, not merely to the privileges of the church or to the rights of the see of Canterbury, but to the general cause of law and order as opposed to violence and murder.

We have thus tried to deal, by the clear light of impartial historical criticism, with a man whose history has been disfigured by three centuries and a half of adoration, followed by three more centuries of obloquy. The almost deified Saint Thomas, the despised Thomas à Becket, appears by that light as a man of great gifts, of high and honest purpose, but whose virtues were disfigured by great defects, and who was placed in a position for which his character was unsuited. Indiscriminate adoration and indiscriminate reviling are alike out of place with so mixed a character; petty carping and sneers are yet more out of place than either. Thomas and his age are gone. He has perhaps no direct claims upon our gratitude * as Englishmen; none certainly for those acts which most won him the admiration of his own day. He won the martyr's crown in contending for principles which we must all rejoice did not ultimately prevail. The Constitutions of Clarendon are now, with the good will of all, part and parcel of our law. We do not claim a place for Thomas of Canterbury beside Alfred and Æthelstan, beside Stephen Langton and Simon de Montfort; yet, as a great and heroic Englishman, he is fully entitled to a respect more disinterested than that

* We speak doubtingly, because the account of one exaction of Henry's resisted by Thomas (Edw. Grim, ap. Giles, i. 21; Rog. Pont. i. 113; Garnier, p. 30) reads very much as if it were resisted on general and not on purely ecclesiastical grounds. Even Mr. Robertson allows (p. 74), in his half-sneering way, that "the primate appeared as a sort of Hampden."

which we show to benefactors whose gifts we are still enjoying. Of no man of such wide-spread fame have we so few visible memorials; Northampton castle has vanished, Canterbury cathedral is rebuilt; a few fragments alone remain on which the eyes of Thomas can have rested. No great foundation, no splendid minster or castle, survives to bear witness to his bounty or to his skill in the arts. He lived in and for his own age. To understand him thoroughly, one must first thoroughly know what that age was. And no fair-minded man who has at once mastered the history and literature of the twelfth century, and has attained the faculty of throwing himself with a lively interest into times so alien to our own, can rise from his studies without the conviction that Thomas of Canterbury, with all his faults, is fairly entitled to a place among the worthies of whom England is proud.

V.

THE REIGN OF EDWARD THE THIRD.*

To lovers of chivalrous adventure I presume that no part of English history is more attractive than the reign of Edward the Third. Edward himself is to some extent a popular hero, and his son the Black Prince is so to a much greater extent. But in Edward himself, when we come fairly to examine him, there is not very much to admire; and as to his son, the provoking thing is that people admire him for the wrong things. Throwing aside all the fopperies and fripperies of chivalry, we have to balance how we can the good and the evil points of the man who was at once the savage conqueror of Limoges and the patriotic statesman of the Good Parliament.

To the political student the reign of Edward is rather repulsive at first sight, but a closer examination soon shows that there is a great deal of important matter below the surface. The primary and popular notion of Edward the Third and his son is that they were two great conquerors, who won brilliant victories, which victories abundantly showed how few Englishmen could beat a vast number of Frenchmen. And no one will deny that Crécy, Poitiers, even Navarete, were wonderful victories indeed, victories of which it is impossible even now to read the account without a thrill of national pride. The pity is that they were victories which served absolutely no purpose—Crécy and Navarete absolutely no purpose, Poitiers only a very temporary purpose. England was successful in battles, but she was thoroughly beaten in war. Edward the Third succeeded by lawful inheritance to a

* This was a review of Mr. Longman's Life and Times of Edward the Third. I have dealt with it in the same way as I dealt with the article on Dr. Vaughan's Revolutions in English History.

large part of southern Gaul. He left to his successor the mere shadow of that ancient inheritance, together with a still more shadowy title to the kingdom of France itself. His only conquest, in the strict sense of the word, was Calais. One may conceive a point of view in which the gain of Calais might counterbalance the loss of nearly all Aquitaine, but this is a very philosophical point of view, and one from which we may be quite sure that no one looked at things in the time of Edward the Third. The broad and plain fact of Edward's reign is that it was a time of great territorial losses. As far as glory consists in winning wonderful battles and leading foreign kings captive, no other age in English history was equally glorious. But at no time, save that of Henry the Sixth, was England ever so thoroughly stripped of possessions which had once been hers.

The comparison which I have just made suggests another. One can hardly help contrasting the two great periods of English warfare and English victory in France. Edward the Third and Henry the Fifth almost necessarily suggest one another; but the difference between the two men is infinite. There is indeed a striking superficial likeness between those among the exploits of the two princes which have found for themselves the most abiding resting-place in popular memory. The story of Azincourt is almost a literal repetition of the story of Crécy, and the victory of Azincourt was hardly richer in immediate results than the victory of Crécy. But Edward was simply victor in a battle; Henry was victor in war, in diplomacy, in all that he attempted. In reading the reign of Edward, the years seem to pass away we know not how. Every ten years there is a great battle, a glorious victory, but the intermediate periods slip by like a dream. They are full of purposeless, unconnected, events, which fall into no certain order, and which it is almost impossible to keep in the memory. The time is stirring enough; there is always something going on; the difficulty is to understand or to

remember what it is that is going on. We move backwards and forwards from Britanny to Gascony, from Flanders to Germany, from Scotland to Castile, without any very clear notion why we are thus flitting backwards and forwards. In the reign of Henry, on the other hand, the wonder is how so many great events, pressing close upon the heels of one another, could be crowded into the few years of his warfare. Edward, in short, made war like a knight-errant; war was a noble pastime for princes and nobles; the whole thing, from beginning to end, reads like a long tournament, a tournament carried on for the amusement and glory of a few, at the expense of suffering millions. Henry cared as little for human suffering as Edward did, perhaps even less. The besieger of Rouen was at least as stern as the besieger of Calais. But the warfare of Henry was no purposeless tournament; not a blow was dealt by him, whether on the field or in the council-chamber, which was not dealt in deep and deadly earnest. It was not as a knight-errant that he made war, but as a general and a statesman of the highest order, as a king worthy to wear the crown of the great William and the great Edward. No doubt Henry was favoured by fortune as few men ever have been favoured. France lay before him in a state which seemed almost to invite his invasion. The murder of John of Burgundy, and the position assumed by his son, served the purposes of Henry as directly as if he had himself planned them beforehand. Edward certainly had no such manifest advantages. But after all, what does statesmanship consist in except in making the most of such advantages as a man has? The position of Henry was undoubtedly far more favourable than the position of Edward; but then Henry made the most of his position, while the Edwards, father and son, failed to make the most of theirs. Henry knew his purposes, and he fulfilled them. Edward failed to fulfil his purposes, or rather it is hard to say whether he had any purposes to fulfil.

Looking at the morality of the two great enterprises against France, a modern writer is perhaps tempted to judge both Edward and Henry with undue harshness. Lord Brougham, for instance, brings Henry up before the tribunal of abstract right, and before the tribunal of abstract right it must be allowed that Henry cuts but a poor figure. But it is seldom fair to judge any historical character by so unswerving a standard; we must make allowance for the circumstances, the habits, the beliefs, the prejudices, of each man's time. As a lesson in moral philosophy, as a comment on the doctrine that man is very far gone from original righteousness, Lord Brougham's estimate of Henry the Fifth is highly instructive; but as a portrait of Henry the Fifth it is unfair. The biographer of Edward, Mr. Longman, cannot wield the trenchant weapons of Lord Brougham, but he is really fairer in his estimate of Edward than Lord Brougham is in his estimate of Henry. He is not dazzled with Edward's somewhat tinsel glories, but he equally avoids the other extreme of unreasonable harshness. He strongly brings out the fact that Edward was really forced into the war by Philip. Philip, in truth, had a policy, while Edward had none. Philip's policy was the obvious, the traditional, French policy, the policy of consolidating his kingdom by convenient annexations. He clearly aimed at the annexation of Edward's duchy of Aquitaine, and he sought for a war which would give him a chance of annexing it. A perfectly calm and passionless English statesman might have doubted whether Aquitaine was worth the keeping. Aquitaine, we must remember, was now strictly an English dependency. When England and Aquitaine first became possessions of the same sovereign, it was not so. Henry of Anjou, King of England, Duke of Normandy, Duke of Aquitaine, count and lord of a crowd of smaller states, was no more a national prince in any of them than Charles of Ghent was a national prince in Castile or Germany or Sicily. But Henry's various continental dominions, widely

as they differed from one another in speech and feeling, might still be looked on as forming one whole, in opposition to his insular kingdom. And in his eyes, and in those of his immediate successors, they certainly outweighed his insular kingdom. Henry was primarily a great continental sovereign, the rival of his less powerful lord at Paris. That he was also King of England was a very important accession to his power and position; still it was an accession and little more. But things changed when John lost all his possessions in Northern Gaul, with the solitary exception of that insular Normandy which his successors have kept to this day. Aquitaine, or what was left of it, was now a mere accession to England, an outlying and distant possession of the English crown. And as the relation of Aquitaine to England changed, its relation to France changed also. We must not forget that Aquitaine, though a fief of the French crown, was in no sense a French province. Unless we except the short time during which Lewis the Seventh ruled there in right of Eleanor, Aquitaine had never been a possession of the Parisian kings, and its people had, in speech and origin, no kindred with the people of France beyond that general kindred which they shared equally with the people of Spain and Italy. When Henry was lord of Rouen, of Tours, and of Bordeaux, none of those cities seemed at all called upon to bow to Paris. But when Paris had swallowed up Rouen and Tours, the position of Bordeaux was sensibly changed. It was changed both politically and geographically. Aquitaine was now no longer a part of the great continental monarchy of Henry. It was a dependency of the island kingdom, which the French conquest of Toulouse had caused to be surrounded by French territory on every side, except those occupied by the sea and the mountains. The Parisian King, instead of being a mere nominal suzerain, was now the immediate master of the larger part of Gaul. Aquitaine now looked like a natural portion of his kingdom, unnaturally detained from

him by a distant potentate. Within the duchy itself the feelings of the inhabitants presented great differences and fluctuations. There was always an English and a French party; of a Spanish party, of which we see signs in the thirteenth century, we see none in the fourteenth. And men's minds might well be divided on the question whether it were better for their country to remain a dependency of England or to become an integral part of France. There can be no doubt that the English rule was the better of the two, as was soon found out when Aquitaine was finally conquered. The nearer master was far more dangerous to local liberties and customs than the more distant one. Bordeaux, while it was a distant dependency of England, came much nearer to the position of a free city than when it had sunk into a provincial town of France. But Englishmen failed then, as they fail now, to adapt themselves to subjects of another race and speech. Their rule was essentially better than that of France, but it was less attractive. France was already beginning to exercise that strange fascination which she goes on exercising still, and which enables her to incorporate and assimilate her conquests in a way in which no other conquering power has succeeded in rivalling her. And, marked as was the ethnical distinction between France and Aquitaine, it was slight compared to the ethnical distinction between Aquitaine and England. All these causes contributed to produce a very divided state of feeling in the duchy. The strength of England lay mainly in the cities; that of France lay mainly among the nobles of the country. But it is easy to see throughout Edward's wars that the English party was decaying, and that the French party was growing. To annex then this great province, which lay so temptingly open to him, a corner which seemed so needful to round off his dominions, was the main object of the policy of Philip of Valois. We are commonly inclined to blame Edward for setting up a claim of his own on the French crown, after he had done homage to Philip, and

had thereby recognized him as lawful King of France. But Edward was fairly goaded into the war by Philip, and he seems to have assumed the title of King of France as much to satisfy the scruples of the Flemings as for any other reason. It was fairly a case of drifting into war—a war which, notwithstanding the two great battles and many other gallant exploits, was begun, continued, and ended in a way which is throughout purposeless and perplexing.

The first war, the war of Crécy and Poitiers, was ended by the Peace of Brétigny. People often fail to understand how important a bearing that peace had upon the wars of the next century. The French are perfectly right in speaking of the whole time from Edward the Third to Henry the Sixth as the Hundred Years' War. The Peace of Brétigny was the formal justification of Henry the Fifth. On no theory could Henry have any hereditary right to the crown of France. The principle on which Edward the Third had claimed that crown was the principle of female succession, and the principle of female succession would have given the rights of Edward the Third to the house of Mortimer. But Henry the Fifth succeeded to the crown of England at a time when England was at war with France. The Peace of Brétigny was undoubtedly broken on the French side. From Brétigny to Troyes no other peace was concluded; there were only truces, and at the end of any truce the King of England had a perfect formal right to begin the war again. That the Peace of Brétigny did not last is a sign of the change of feeling which was gradually coming over southern Gaul. Two hundred years earlier we may be sure that Aquitanian patriotism would have rejoiced in an arrangement which made the lands south of the Loire free from all superiority on the part of the Parisian crown. But a large part of the former dominions of Henry the Second submitted with the utmost reluctance to those terms of the treaty which restored them to the rule of the descendant of their ancient

dukes. Even within the lands which had never been separated from England the rule of the Black Prince seems not to have thoroughly taken root. In fact an independent principality of Aquitaine was fast becoming, in French phrase, an anachronism. And an independent principality of Aquitaine in the hands of an English prince was somewhat of a pretence into the bargain. At an earlier time independent commonwealths of Bordeaux and La Rochelle might have been something more than a dream. But in Aquitaine, as throughout the fiefs of the Parisian crown, with the single half exception of Flanders, the princely power, royal or ducal, was always too strong to allow of the growth of a system of free cities, such as arose within the bounds of each of the three Imperial kingdoms.

The reign of Edward the Third is also of great importance in a constitutional point of view; it is equally so in a social, a literary, and a religious point of view. But in these points also the reign of Edward has something of the same character that it has in military affairs. Changes take place in a sort of invisible, incidental way; we cannot lay our hands on any marked revolutions, like those of the reign of Henry the Third, nor on many great and lasting enactments, like those of the reign of Edward the First. The fourteenth century is indeed more fertile than any other in one most important class of political precedents. It is the only century since the eleventh * which saw two kings deposed by authority of Parliament. Yet even the depositions of Edward the Second and Richard the Second do not stand out in the same way as the events of the thirteenth century or of the seventeenth. The reign of Edward the Third was a reign of frequent Parliaments and of much legislation, but Edward could no more be compared to his grandfather as a legislator than he could as a statesman and a warrior. Even his commercial legislation

* Charles the First was not *deposed*, but was executed being King. This leaves the seventeenth century with only one case of deposition strictly so called.

was done, as it were, by haphazard. So indeed was every thing that he did. He constantly wanted money, and his constant want of money was a great constitutional advantage. He was driven to summon Parliaments, commonly yearly, sometimes oftener; and those Parliaments gradually learned their strength. How important these silent influences were is shown when we reach the last two years of Edward's life. In the Good Parliament we see how the Commons had been gradually gaining more and more of power and enlightenment, till they were able to carry some of the most thorough measures of reform, and to make one of the most successful attacks on the executive government, that any legislative body ever made. No doubt it was a great help for the popular party to have the Prince of Wales on their side, and, when he was gone, his loss was sadly felt in the reaction of the next year. But it was a great thing to see a Prince of Wales put himself at the head of a real popular movement of reform, a very different process from a Prince of Wales getting up a factious personal opposition against his father. It is his conduct in this Parliament, far more than any of his doings beyond the sea, which gives the Black Prince his real claim to rank among the worthies of England. The acts of the Good Parliament and their unhappy reversal in the next year, the good influence of Prince Edward and the evil influence of John of Gaunt, are points which stand out conspicuously in the legislative history of this reign. On the legislation of this time there is one dark blot, which even touches the Good Parliament itself: I mean the constant attempt to control matters which are beyond the proper province of legislation, and, worse still, the constant attempt to control them in a way contrary to the interests of the most numerous and the most helpless class of the people. The depopulation caused by the Black Death made labour scarce; wages of course rose, and successive Parliaments, the Good Parliament among them, undertook the cruel and impossible task of keeping wages down by

law. At the same time, and very much by reason of the same causes, the emancipation of the villains was largely going on. Thus the class of free labourers was being enlarged and strengthened; the payment of wages for work done was constantly becoming more habitual, while the class of people who could be set to work without wages was constantly diminishing. One might almost have expected that the emancipation of villains would have been forbidden by law, just as in old Rome restrictions were put on the emancipation of slaves. But happily the Church taught that to set a bondman free was a pious and charitable deed, and men could hardly be ordered by Act of Parliament to abstain from adding to the number of their good works.

The mention of the religious and the literary condition of England during this reign at once suggests that we are dealing with the age of Wyclif and the age of Chaucer. I am not going to discuss either of them at the end of an article. But those names stamp the age of Edward the Third as the beginning of the theological reformation in England and as the beginning of modern English literature. I confess that the purely theological aspect of the time interests me less than the part played by this age, as by other ages, in the long struggle between England and Rome. The English spirit which, three centuries before, had, through the mouth of Tostig, defied Pope Nicolas on his throne, came out in the Parliaments of Edward the Third as it came out in other Parliaments before and after him. And it was a sound and happy line of argument, a true English love of precedent, which led the Good Parliament to appeal to the practice of the sainted Edward himself as unanswerable evidence of the true and ancient supremacy of the crown in matters ecclesiastical. Oddly enough, this was the very moment when the old ground on which that supremacy was based was beginning to give way. Up to this time, ever since the last Englishman ceased to worship Thunder and Woden, Englishmen had been united in reli-

gion; the Church and the nation had been two aspects of the same body. But the teaching of Wyclif gave birth in the next generation to our earliest Nonconformists; when we ought to have had our first toleration, we did have our first persecution. With the appearance of the Lollards, the Church and the nation ceased to be fully one, and the puzzles and controversies of modern times had their beginning.

Another sign of the times in religious matters is the turn which the bounty of pious founders and benefactors was now taking. The day of the monks was over. The great struggle which had been going on ever since the days of Dunstan was at last decided in favour of the seculars. Monasteries were still founded now and then, but there is nothing like the zeal for them which followed on the Benedictine movement in the tenth and eleventh centuries, on the Cistercian movement in the twelfth, on the Franciscan and Dominican movement in the thirteenth. Colleges in the Universities, chantries for the repose of their founders' souls, colleges for the more splendid performance of divine service in this or that parish church, hospitals for the poor, schools for the young, are now the objects of pious benefactions far more largely than the monastic orders. On the other hand, the constant wars with France led, on an obvious principle of policy, to temporary seizures of the property of the Alien Priories. These temporary seizures again suggested the complete suppression of those priories in the next century, and this formed a precedent for the general suppression of all monasteries in the century after that.

On the whole then the fourteenth century, the age of Edward the Third, is an age whose importance lies below the surface. It sets before us nothing like the great tragedy of the eleventh century or the mighty new birth of the thirteenth. It has more in common with the silent working of the twelfth. But the visible actors are on a smaller scale. The tinsel frippery of chivalry hangs

around the names of Edward and his son, but, when stripped of these factitious attractions, they seem small indeed beside the two great Henries. Edward seems great between his father and his grandson, but the real personal greatness of our kings leaps from Edward the First to Henry the Fifth. But there is this difference between them. The work of Edward the First, like the work of the Conqueror, still abides. Each of them has left his direct impress on English history for all time. Henry, hardly their inferior in natural gifts, has had only an indirect influence upon after events. The war which he waged, the war in which France was so nearly conquered, showed in the end that France could not really be conquered. His son, the only English King who was ever crowned King of France, was the king who lost the last relics of that continental dominion which England began to lose under the king who first took up the vain title of French royalty. As long as Calais was kept, men ever and anon dreamed that those who still held the key of France, might one day enter on the possession of France itself. But such thoughts were mere momentary dreams, and never continuously influenced our policy. The victories of Edward the Third began the chain of events which in the end made England a strictly insular power. As such we may be thankful for them.

VI.

THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE.

The Holy Roman Empire. By JAMES BRYCE, B.A.*
Oxford, 1864.

IT may seem a hard saying, but it is one which the facts fully bear out, that hardly one student in ten of mediæval history really grasps that one key to the whole subject without which mediæval history is simply an unintelligible chaos. That key is no other than the continued existence of the Roman Empire. As long as people are taught to believe that the Empire came to an end in the year 476, a true understanding of the next thousand years becomes utterly impossible. No man can understand either the politics or the literature of that whole period, unless he constantly bears in mind that, in the ideas of the men of those days, the Roman Empire, the Empire of Augustus, Constantine, and Justinian, was not a thing of the past but a thing of the present. Without grasping the mediæval theory of the Empire, it is impossible fully to grasp the theory and to follow the career of the Papacy. Without understanding the position of the Empire, it is impossible rightly to understand the origin and developement of the various European states. Without such an understanding, the history of the nations which clave to the Empire, and the history of the nations which fell away from it, are alike certain to be misconceived. Unless viewed in the light of the Imperial theory, the whole history of Germany, Italy, and Burgundy becomes an inexplicable riddle. The

* [Now D.C.L. and Regius Professor of Civil Law. The article was founded on the first edition. The third edition (1871), to which I have brought in several references, is greatly enlarged and improved.] [1872.]

struggle of Hildebrand and Henry loses half its meaning, the whole position of the Swabian Emperors becomes an insoluble puzzle, the most elaborate prose and the most impassioned verse of Dante sink into purposeless gibberish, if we do not fully grasp the fact that in the mind of all contemporary Europe, the Hohenstaufen were the direct and lawful successors of the Julii. How Germany, once the most united state of Western Europe, gradually changed from a compact and vigorous kingdom into one of the laxest of confederations, can never be understood unless we trace how the German kingdom was crushed and broken to pieces beneath the weight of the loftier diadem which rested on the brow of its kings. Those misrepresentations of all European history with which French historians and French politicians are apt to deceive the unwary can never be fully exposed, except by a thorough acquaintance with the true position and true nationality of those Teutonic kings and Cæsars whom the Gaul is so apt to look upon as his countrymen and not as his masters. The relations between Eastern and Western Europe can never be taken in, unless we fully understand the true nature of those rival Empires, each of which asserted and believed itself to be the one true and lawful possessor of the heritage of ancient Rome. We see our way but feebly through the long struggle between the East and the West, between Christendom and Islam, unless we fully grasp the position of the Cæsar, the chief of Christendom, and the Caliph, the chief of Islam; unless we see, in the complex interpenetration of the divided Empire and the divided Caliphate, at once what the theory of Christian and of Moslem was, and how utterly either theories failed to be carried out in all its fullness. In a word, as we began by saying, the history of the Empire is the key to the whole history of mediæval Europe, and it is a key which as yet is found in far fewer hands than it ought to be.

The immediate cause of the failure of most historical students to grasp the paramount importance of the Imperial

history is of course to be found in the fact that hardly any of the books from which students draw their knowledge give its proper prominence to the history of the Empire. This is indeed little more than a truism. The question is, how it comes to pass that even able and well-informed writers have failed to bring forward this most important portion of history as it should be brought forward. The causes, we think, are tolerably obvious.

First. Our own national history has been less affected by the history of the Empire than that of any other European country. Britain, Spain, and Sweden, in their insular and peninsular positions, were the parts of Europe over which the Imperial influence was slightest, and of the three, that influence was slighter over Britain than it was over Spain, and not much greater than it was over Sweden. Of direct connexion with the Empire, England had very little, and Scotland still less. The external history of England does indeed ever and anon touch the history of the Empire, in the way in which the history of each European state must ever and anon touch the history of every other European state. Once or twice in a century we come across an Emperor as a friend or as an enemy, in one case as a possible suzerain. As England supplied the spiritual Rome with a single pope, so she supplied the temporal Rome with a single king, a king who never visited his capital or received the crown and title of Augustus. But the whole internal history of England, and the greater part of its external history, went on pretty much as if there had been no Holy Roman Empire at all. Our one moment of most intimate connexion with the Empire brings out most fully how slight, compared with that of other nations, our usual connexion with the Empire was. Every reader of English history knows the name of Richard, Earl of Cornwall and King of the Romans, and knows the part which he played in the internal politics of England. But very few readers, and we suspect by no means all writers, of English history seem to have any clear notion what a King of the

Romans was. On Scotland indeed the Roman Empire has had, in one way, a most important internal influence, through the authority which Scottish lawyers, in such marked contrast to those of England, have for so long a time attached to the Roman law. But this is simply because Scottish lawgivers or lawyers chose that it should be so; on the actual events of Scottish history, external and internal, the Empire and its rulers have had even less influence than they have had on those of England. As then our own national history can be written and understood with very little reference to the Holy Roman Empire, British readers lie under a strong temptation to undervalue the importance of the Holy Roman Empire in the general history of the world.

Secondly. When British readers get beyond the limits of their own island, not only is their attention not commonly drawn to the history of the Empire, but it is commonly drawn to a history which is actually antagonistic to the history of the Empire. France, so long the rival of England, and for that cause so long the ally of Scotland, is the country with which, next to their own, most British readers are most familiar Now it is certain that no one who learns French history at the hands of Frenchmen can ever rightly understand the history of the Empire. The whole history of France, strictly so called, the history of the Parisian kings, has been for six hundred years one long tale of aggrandizement at the expense of the Empire. From the annexation of Lyons to the annexation of Savoy, all have been acts of one great drama, a drama of which the devastation of the Palatinate, the seizure of Strassburg in time of peace, the tyranny of the first Buonaparte over the whole German nation, are familiar and characteristic incidents. French history consists mainly of a record of wrongs inflicted on the later and feebler Empire, prefaced by a cool appropriation of the glories of the Empire in the days of its early greatness. In official and popular French belief, two great

German dynasties, who held modern France as a subject province, are conveniently turned into national Frenchmen. The greatest of German kings, the first of German Cæsars, Charles, the lord of Rome and Aachen, is strangely turned about into a French Emperor of the West, the precursor of either Buonaparte. The ancient landmarks of European geography are wiped out, the names of the most famous European cities are mutilated or barbarized, in order to throw some colour of right and antiquity over the results of six hundred years of intrigue and violence. French history, as it is commonly presented to Englishmen, exists only through a systematic misrepresentation of Imperial history. Till all French influences are wholly cast aside and trampled under foot, the true history of the Holy Roman Empire can never be understood.

Thirdly. It seems not unlikely that the righteous and generous sympathy which we all feel towards regenerate Italy has tended somewhat to obscure the true character of the Empire. So many Austrian archdukes were elected Kings of Germany and Emperors of the Romans that people have gradually come to identify the House of Austria and the Roman Empire. Nothing is more common than to see the title of "Emperor of Austria," the most monstrous invention of modern diplomacy, carried back into the last century, and even earlier. Even Sir Walter Scott, in some of his novels, Anne of Geierstein for instance, seems to have had great difficulty in triumphing over a notion that every Emperor must have been Duke of Austria, and that every Duke of Austria must have been Emperor. We have seen Frederick Barbarossa set down as an Austrian because he was an Emperor; we have seen the Leopold of Morgarten and the Leopold of Sempach exalted into Emperors because they were Austrians. People thus learn to identify two things than which no two can be more unlike, and to look on the ancient reality with the eyes with which they rightly look on the modern counterfeit. The dislike which every

generous mind feels towards the oppressors of modern Italy is thus transferred to that earlier Empire which, always in theory and often in practice, was as much Italian as German. As Charles the Great becomes the forerunner of Buonaparte, so Frederick the beloved of Lodi, and Frederick the national king of Palermo, and Otto, the dream of whose short life was to reign as a true Roman Cæsar in the Eternal City, all are popularly looked upon as forerunners of Francis Joseph, perhaps of Philip the Second.* The Austrian delusion, no less than the French delusion, must be utterly cast aside by every one who would understand what Charles and Otto and Henry and Frederick really were.

Lastly. Even among those who better know the facts of the case, and who better understand the leading idea of the mediæval Empire, there is a certain tendency to underrate the importance of the Imperial history, on the ground that the mediæval Empire was throughout an unreality, if not an imposture. We fully admit the utter unreality of the position of Francis the Second, Emperor-elect of the Romans, King of Germany and Jerusalem; we fully admit that Charles the Great himself was not a Roman Emperor in exactly the same sense as Vespasian or Trajan. We may freely grant that the Imperial idea was never fully carried out, and that it was by no means for the interest of the world that it should be carried out. We may wonder at the belief of the ages which held, as undoubted and eternal truths, *first*, that it was a matter of right that there should be an universal monarch of the world; *secondly*, that that universal monarchy belonged, no less of eternal right, to the Roman Emperor, the successor of Augustus; and, *thirdly*, that the German King, the choice of the German Electors, was the undoubted Roman Emperor, and therefore, of eternal right, Lord of the

* We have seen in a popular work the words "The Emperor Philip the Second." The reasoning is irresistible: Philip's father was an Emperor; how could Philip himself fail to be an Emperor too?

World. This belief seems to us very strange, but it was the belief of Dante. We rejoice that this scheme of universal dominion was never practically carried out; we pride ourselves that our own island at least was always exempted from the sway of the universal sovereign. But all this should not lead us at all to underrate the paramount importance of the Imperial idea. A belief may be false, absurd, unreal, mischievous, as we please; but this in no way touches the historical importance of such belief. Christians believe that the leading idea of Mahometanism is a grievous error; Protestants believe that the leading idea of the Papacy is a grievous error; but no one argues that either Mahometanism or the Papacy has therefore been without influence on the fate of the world, or that any historical student can safely neglect the history of one or the other, merely because he looks on them as erroneous beliefs. In fact, the deadlier the error the more important are the results of an error which is accepted by large masses of men. It may be very wrong to believe that Mahomet was the prophet of God; but the fact that millions of men have so believed has changed the destinies of a large portion of the world. It may be very wrong to believe that Saint Peter was the Prince of the Apostles and that the Bishop of Rome is Saint Peter's successor; but the fact that millions of men have so believed and do so believe has affected the course of all European history and politics down to this day. In these cases no one attempts to deny the importance of the facts; no one holds that either Mahometan or Papal history can safely be neglected. So it should be with the history of the mediæval Empire. The Imperial idea may have been unreal, absurd, mischievous; but it is not therefore the less important. Men did believe in it; perhaps they were wrong to believe in it; but the fact that they did believe in it affected the whole history of the world for many ages. It may have been foolish to believe that the German king was necessarily Roman Emperor, and that the Roman

Emperor was necessarily Lord of the World. But men did believe it; and the fact of their believing it changed the whole face of Europe. It might have been much wiser if the German kings had been content to be real German kings, and had not striven after the shadowy majesty of Roman Emperors. But, as a matter of fact, they did so strive; it was not in human nature for men in their position to do otherwise; and the fact that they did so strive entailed the most important consequences upon their own and upon every neighbouring realm. If the history of the Empire were to be set down purely as the history of error and folly, it should still be remembered that the history of error and folly forms by far the largest part of the history of mankind.

But we are far from admitting that the history of the Empire is purely a part of the history of human folly, though we may be obliged to admit that it is a part of the history of human error. The idea of the Empire, the idea of an universal Christian monarchy, not interfering with the local independence of particular kingdoms and commonwealths, but placing Cæsar Augustus, the chosen and anointed chief of Christendom, as the common guide and father of all—such an idea is as noble and captivating as it is impracticable. It is an idea which has commended itself to some of the noblest spirits that the world has seen. It was the idea for which the first Frederick struggled with a far from merely selfish aim. It was the idea to which the early revivers of scientific jurisprudence clung as to the one foundation of order and legal government throughout the world. It was the great principle which acted as the guiding spirit of the prose, the verse, and the life of Dante. To men of that time, living amid the perpetual strife of small principalities and commonwealths, the vision of an universal Empire of law and right shone with an alluring brightness, which we, accustomed to a system of national governments and international relations, can hardly understand. But be the worth of the

idea what it may, its practical influence on the history of Christendom can hardly be overrated. The Empire may have been a shadow, but it was a shadow to which men were for ages ready to devote their thoughts, their pens, and their swords. The results were none the less practical because the object was unattainable. We repeat that, without a full understanding of the mediæval conception of the Empire, without a full grasp of the way in which that conception influenced men's minds and actions from the eighth century to the fourteenth, the greater and more important part of mediæval history remains an insoluble riddle.

Knowing then, as we do, the unspeakable importance of right views of the Empire to a true understanding of mediæval history, and being unable, as we are, to lay our hand upon any other book in the English tongue which gives so clear and thorough an account of the whole matter, it is with no common delight that we welcome the appearance of the small but remarkable volume whose name we have placed at the head of this article. It is the first complete and connected view of the mediæval Empire which has ever been given to British readers. Mr. Bryce's book is of course not a history, but an essay; he has not attempted so hopeless a task as to narrate the fates of the Empire and its attendant kingdoms within the space of a single thin volume. But no one must confound Mr. Bryce's Arnold essay with the common run of prize compositions. Mr. Bryce's book, if it be not a bull to say so, has been written since it gained the historical prize at Oxford. "It is right," he tells us, "to state that this Essay has been greatly changed and enlarged since it was composed for the Arnold Prize." Any one who knows anything of prize essays could have told as much by the light of nature. It is hardly possible that any mere academic exercise could have displayed the depth of thought, the thoroughness of research, the familiarity with a whole learning of a very recondite kind, which stand revealed in every page of this

volume. The merits of the book are so palpably due in the main to this later revision, that we could almost wish that the words *Arnold Prize Essay* were removed from the titlepage.

Of the Essay itself, in its present form, we can hardly trust ourselves to speak all our thoughts. Men naturally and rightly look with some suspicion on criticism which speaks of a novice in language which is seldom deserved even by a veteran. But it is only in such language that we can utter our honest conviction with regard to the merits of the volume before us. Mr. Bryce's Essay may seem ephemeral in form, but it is not ephemeral in substance. He has, in truth, by a single youthful effort, placed himself on a level with men who have given their lives to historical study. Like the young Opuntian in Pindar—

> οἷον ἐν Μαραθῶνι, συ-
> λαθεὶς ἀγενείων,
> μένεν ἀγῶνα πρεσβυτέρων.

Mr. Bryce's Essay must be placed in the same rank, and must be judged by the same standard, as the most voluminous works of professed historians. He has done for historic literature a service as great as any of theirs.

Mr. Bryce's great merit is the clear and thorough way in which he sets forth what the mediæval conception of the Empire really was, and especially that religious sentiment which so strangely came to attach itself to the power which had once been the special representative of heathen pride and persecution. This is a part of the subject which we have never before seen set forth with the same power and fullness. For, of course, in combating the vulgar error that the Roman Empire came historically to an end in 476, though Mr. Bryce is doing excellent service to the cause of truth, he is not putting forth any new discovery. Thus much Sir Francis Palgrave has already established for the West, and Mr. Finlay for the East. The Eastern side of the subject is, we cannot but think, somewhat neglected

by Mr. Bryce, as perhaps, on the other hand, the Western side is by Mr. Finlay. Sir Francis Palgrave and Mr. Bryce have to deal with the same side of the subject, but they look at it with somewhat different eyes. With Mr. Bryce indeed the Empire is his main, or rather sole, subject, while the contributions of Sir Francis to Imperial history, valuable as they are, have come out incidentally in dealing with matters not immediately connected with the Empire. Sir Francis again concerns himself mainly with those outward forms and institutions which show that the Empire did not formally die. Mr. Bryce has more to do with the theory of the Empire itself, and with the various shapes through which it passed from Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus to Francis the Second of Lorraine. This he has done in so complete and admirable a manner that we trust that the essay is only the precursor of a narrative. We trust that Mr. Bryce may one day give us a history of the mediæval Roman Empire worthy to be placed by the side of Dean Milman's history of the mediæval Roman Church.

The theory of the mediæval Empire is that of an universal Christian monarchy. The Roman Empire and the Catholic Church are two aspects of one society, a society ordained by the divine will to spread itself over the whole world. Of this society Rome is marked out by divine decree as the predestined capital, the chief seat alike of spiritual and of temporal rule. At the head of this society, in its temporal character as an Empire, stands the temporal chief of Christendom, the Roman Cæsar. At its head, in its spiritual character as a Church, stands the spiritual chief of Christendom, the Roman Pontiff. Cæsar and Pontiff alike rule by divine right, each as God's immediate Vicar within his own sphere. Each ruler is bound to the other by the closest ties. The Cæsar is the Advocate of the Roman Church, bound to defend her by the temporal arm against all temporal enemies. The Pontiff, on the other hand, though the Cæsar holds his rank, not of him, but by an

independent divine commission, has the lofty privilege of personally admitting the Lord of the World to his high office, of hallowing the Lord's Anointed, and of making him in some sort a partaker in the mysterious privileges of the priesthood. The sway alike of Cæsar and of Pontiff is absolutely universal; it is local, in so far as Rome is its chosen seat; but it is in no way national: it is not confined to Italy, or Germany, or Europe; to each alike, in his own sphere, God has given the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession. And each of these lofty offices is open to every baptized man; each alike is purely elective; each may be the reward of merit in any rank of life or in any corner of Christendom. While smaller offices were closely confined by local or aristocratic restrictions, the throne of Augustus and the chair of Peter were, in theory at least, open to the ambition of every man of orthodox belief. Even in the darkest times of aristocratic exclusiveness, no one dared to lay down as a principle that the Roman Emperor, any more than the Roman Bishop, need be of princely or noble ancestry. Freedom of birth—Roman citizenship, in short, to clothe mediæval ideas in classical words—was all that was needed. Each power alike, as the power of a Vicar of God upon earth, rises far above all petty considerations of race or birthplace. The Lord of the World has all mankind alike for the objects of his paternal rule; the successor of Saint Peter welcomes all alike, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, within the one universal fold over which he has the commission to bind and to loose, to remit and to retain.

Here is a conception as magnificent as it was impracticable. No wonder indeed that such a theory fascinated men's minds for ages, and that in such a cause they were willing to spend and to be spent. That it never was carried out history tells us at the first glance. It is evident that neither the Roman Pontiff nor the Roman Cæsar ever extended their common sway over the whole of the world, or

even over the whole of Christendom. And the two powers, which were in theory designed to work in harmony, appear, for the most part, in real history as the bitterest of rivals. Still no theory, as a theory, can be more magnificent. But how did such a theory arise? What is the Roman Empire and the Roman Emperor? At the two ends of their existence those words express ideas as unlike one another as either of them is unlike the theory which Otto the Third and Gregory the Fifth did for a moment carry out in practice. At the one end of the chain we see the heathen magistrate of a heathen commonwealth, carefully avoiding all royal titles and royal insignia, associating on terms of equality with other distinguished citizens, but carefully grasping the reality of absolute power by the stealthy process of uniting in his own person a crowd of offices which had hitherto been deemed inconsistent with one another. Such was the first Roman Emperor, and in his days the Roman Pontiff as yet was not. The last Roman Emperor was a German king, whose German kingdom was almost as imaginary as his Roman Empire. He was a mighty potentate indeed, but mighty only through the possession of hereditary or conquered realms, which mostly lay beyond the limits of either Roman or German dominion. He was adorned with all the titles, and surrounded with all the external homage, which could befit either German king or Roman Emperor. But as regards the local Rome he had no further connexion, no further authority or influence, than might belong to any other Catholic prince of equal power. The Roman Emperor no longer claimed any shadow of jurisdiction in his ancient capital; even in his German realm, his position had sunk to that of the president of one of the laxest of federal bodies. The Lord of the World, the temporal head of Christendom, retained nothing but a barren precedence over other princes, which other princes were not always ready to admit. His position, Roman, German, and œcumenical, was, as the event proved, utterly unreal and precarious, ready to fall in pieces at the first

touch of a vigorous assailant. Such were Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus, the first, and Francis the Second, the last, of the Roman Emperors. Each is equally unlike the Roman Emperor of the true mediæval theory. How then did the same title, in theory denoting one unchanged office through the whole period, come to be attached at different times to personages so widely unlike each other? We will, under Mr. Bryce's guidance, run briefly through the various stages through which the grand theory of the Christian Empire arose and fell.

Mr. Bryce properly begins at the beginning. He starts with a sketch of the state of things under the old Roman Empire, the old dominion of the Roman Commonwealth under her nominal magistrates and practical sovereigns, the Emperors of the Julian, Claudian, and other Imperial houses, down to the changes introduced, first by Diocletian, and then by Constantine. The chief point here to be noticed is the absolute want of nationality in the Empire. But, in this lack of nationality, the Roman Empire does but continue the Roman Republic. The Roman Republic was intensely local; every association gathered round the one centre, the city of Rome; but it was less national than any other commonwealth in all history. It grew, in fact, by gradually extending its franchise over Latium, Italy, and the whole Mediterranean world. The edict of Caracalla, whatever were its motives, did but put the finishing touch to the work begun by the mythical Romulus in his league with the Sabine Tatius. From the Ocean to the Euphrates the civilized world was now Roman in name, and from the Ocean to Mount Taurus it was Roman in feeling. Mr. Bryce, we think, overrates the distinct nationality of the Greeks of this age, and underrates that of Syria and Egypt, provinces which never really became either Roman or Greek. Then came, under Diocletian and Constantine, the transformation of the Empire into something like an avowed royalty—we can hardly say an avowed monarchy, seeing that the system of Diocletian involved the

simultaneous reign of more than one Emperor. Under this system too the Old Rome ceased to be the seat of government. Milan and Nikomêdeia became Imperial cities, till Constantine made a better and more permanent choice than all in his New Rome by the Bosporos.

With Constantine too comes in a new element more important than all. Hitherto we have indeed had a Roman Empire, but it has as yet had no claim whatever, in a Christian sense, to the epithet of Holy. Hitherto Rome and her princes have been the enemies of the Faith, drunken with the blood of the saints. But from the conversion of Constantine onwards, the epithet, though not yet formally given, was in truth practically deserved. Rome and Christianity formed so close an alliance that, in at least one portion of the Empire, the names Roman and Christian became synonymous.* Emperors presided in the councils of the Church; Christian ecclesiastics obtained the rank of high temporal dignitaries; orthodoxy and loyalty, heresy and treason, became almost convertible terms. Christianity, in fact, became the religion of the Roman Empire, universal within its limits, but making hardly any progress beyond them. And so it is to this day. Christianity still remains all but exclusively the religion of Europe and of European colonies, that is, of those nations which either formed part of the Roman Empire, or came within the range of Rome's civilising influence. Thus the Empire, which once had been the bitterest foe of the Gospel, now became inseparably connected with its profession. The heathen sanctity which had once hedged in the Emperor was now exchanged for a sanctity of another kind. The High Pontiff of Pagan Rome passed by easy steps into the Anointed of the Lord, the temporal chief of Christendom.

The Empire then and the Emperor thus became Holy;

* The Greek, mediæval and modern, down to the late classical revival, was indifferently called Ῥωμαῖος and Χριστιανός. Ἕλλην, as in the New Testament, expressed only the Paganism of a past age.

but yet the Empire, even in the East, was not a Caliphate. The successor of Mahomet inherited alike the temporal and the spiritual functions of the Prophet. In the Mahometan system, Church and State needed not to be united, because they had never been distinct. But closely as the Roman Empire and the Christian Church became united, one might almost say identified, traces still remained of the days when they had been distinct and hostile bodies. The internal organization of the Church, the gradations of its hierarchy, the rights of Bishops and of Councils, had grown up nearly to perfection before the Empire became Christian. The constitution of the Church was a kind of theocratic democracy. The Bishop's commission was divine, proceeding neither from the prince nor from the people; but it was the popular voice, and not the voice of the priesthood alone, which marked out the person on whom that divine commission should be bestowed. Of such an organization the Emperor might become the patron, the protector, the external ruler, but he could not strictly become the head. The spiritual power thus remained something in close alliance with the temporal, but still something distinct. The two were never so completely fused together in the Imperial idea as they were in the idea of the Caliphate. In the East the priesthood became subservient; in the West it became independent, and at last hostile. But in either case it was distinct. Whether Emperors deposed Patriarchs or Popes excommunicated Emperors, the Pontiff and the Emperor were two distinct persons. In the Mahometan system the Caliph is Pontiff and Emperor in one.

From the time of Constantine, Constantinople, the New Rome, became the chief seat of Empire; towards the end of the fifth century it became the only seat. It should never be forgotten, and Mr. Bryce calls all due attention to the fact, that the event of the year 476, so often mistaken for a fall of the Roman Empire, was, in its form, a reunion of the Western Empire to the Eastern. Here again, nothing is easier than to say that this is an unreal, unpractical, view.

It is an obvious thing to argue that Italy was not reunited to the East, but that the Roman dominion was destroyed altogether; that the supremacy of the Eastern Emperors in Italy was merely nominal, and the pretended reunion of the Empire merely an excuse to save their foolish pride. Be it so; but, as we said before on the general subject, when words and forms, however unreal in themselves, exercise a practical influence on men's actions, they cease to be unreal. The majesty of Rome still lived in men's minds; the Roman Emperor, the Roman Consuls, the Roman Senate and People, still went on. Odoacer and Theodoric might reign as national kings over their own people;* but the Roman population of Italy cheated themselves into the belief that the barbarian king was merely a lieutenant of the absent Emperor. Such a belief might be a delusion, but it was a living belief, and it did not always remain a delusion. When Belisarius, in the year of his consulship, landed in Italy, he appeared to the Roman population, not as a foreign conqueror, but as a deliverer come to restore them to their natural relation to their lawful sovereign. And as Mr. Bryce truly observes, unless we remember that the line of Emperors never ceased, that from 476 to 800 the Byzantine Cæsar was always in theory, often in practice, recognized as the lawful Lord of Rome and Italy, it is impossible rightly to understand the true significance of the assumption of the Empire by Charles the Great.†

Almost the only defect of any consequence in Mr. Bryce's

* Mr. Bryce, otherwise most accurate in his account of these events, repeats the common statement that Odoacer assumed the title of "King of Italy." We know of no ancient authority for this statement, and it is most unlikely in itself. Territorial titles were not in use till some ages later, and no one would be so unlikely to assume a style of this kind as one who professed himself to be an Imperial lieutenant. [This slip has been corrected by Mr. Bryce in his third edition, p. 26.]

† Mr. Bryce remarks that, in the Middle Ages, the Western Emperors of the fifth century seem to have been quite forgotten. The lists of Emperors from Augustus to Maximilian or Rudolf or Ferdinand, always go on uninterruptedly in the Eastern line from Theodosius to Constantine the Sixth.

work is that he seems hardly to realize the importance, in any theory of the Empire, alike of the Eastern Empire and of the Eastern Church. He shows neither ignorance, nor concealment, nor even misconception of the facts. But he hardly gives the facts their full prominence. The truth is that the existence of Eastern Christendom, as it is the great stumbling-block of the Papal theory, is also the great stumbling-block of the Imperial theory. Ingenious men might theorize about the two lights and the two swords, and argue whether of the twain were the brighter and the stronger. They might debate whether the Pope held of the Emperor, or the Emperor of the Pope; but it was agreed on both sides that there could be only one Pope and one Emperor. These magnificent theories of the Church and the Empire were in truth set aside by the fact that a large portion of Christendom, that portion too which could most truly claim to represent unchanged the earliest traditions both of the Church and of the Empire, acknowledged no Pope at all, and acknowledged a rival Emperor. It is impossible to deny that, as far as uninterrupted political succession went, it was the Eastern and not the Western Emperor who was the lineal heir of the old Cæsars. The act which placed Charles the Great on the Imperial throne was strictly a revolt, a justifiable revolt, it might be, but still a revolt. It was in the East, and in the East alone, that the Imperial titles and Imperial traditions—in a word, the whole political heritage of Rome—continued absolutely unbroken down to the days of the Frank Conquest. The Greek prince whom the Crusaders hurled from the Theodosian Column was, as Mr. Finlay says, a truer successor of Augustus than was Frederick Barbarossa. The Eastern Church too presented even a more practical answer to the claims of the Western Pontiff than the Eastern Empire did to the claims of the Western Cæsar. The universal dominion of either was a theory, and only a theory, as long as their dominion reached, not to the world's end, not even to the Euphrates, but only

to the Hadriatic. Alike in the days of Otto and in the days of Dante, the most unchanged portion of the Roman world still refused to acknowledge the sway of either the Western Cæsar or the Western Pontiff. In truth, the elaborate theories of the mediæval Empire were not propounded, and could not with any decency have been propounded, as long as the Eastern Church and Empire retained their old position. When Dante wrote, an Emperor of the Romans still reigned at Constantinople, but he had sunk to be simply one amidst a crowd of Eastern princes, Greek and Frank.* By that time too there had begun to be some ground for bringing the charge of schism against the ancient Churches of the East. There was at least a pretext for saying that the Church of Constantinople had been reconciled to the Church of Rome, and had again fallen away. Such a theory could hardly have been put forth in the days of the great Macedonian Emperors, when the New Rome, and not the Old, was still mistress of the Mediterranean, and when a large portion of the Italian peninsula still owed allegiance to the Eastern and not to the Western Cæsar. Mr. Bryce does not forget these things; but we cannot think that he gives them all the prominence which they certainly deserve.†

From the accession of Charles the Great onwards, Mr. Bryce is thoroughly at home. During the whole of the eighth century, the Imperial power in Italy had been gradually waning. Lombard invasions had narrowed the boundary of the Imperial province, and the Iconoclast controversy had shaken the loyalty of the subjects of the Empire. The Bishop of Rome had stood forth as the champion alike of orthodoxy and of nationality, and the practical rule of the city had been transferred to the Frankish King. Still the tie was not formally severed; the image and superscription of Cæsar still appeared on

* Dante, *De Monarchiâ*, iii. 10: "Scindere imperium esset destruere ipsum, consistente imperio in unitate monarchiæ universalis."

† [This omission is largely supplied in Mr. Bryce's third edition, p. 189.]

the coin of his Western capital, and Pippin and Charles ruled, like Odoacer, by no higher title than that of Patrician. At last the accession of Eirênê filled up the measure of Western indignation. The throne of Augustus could not be lawfully filled by a woman, least of all by a woman who raised herself to power by the deposition and blinding of her own child. The throne was vacant; the Christian world could not remain without an Emperor:* the Senate and People of the Old Rome had too long submitted to the dictation of the New; they asserted their dormant rights, and chose their Patrician Charles, not as the founder of a new Empire, not as the restorer of a fallen Empire, but as the lawful successor of their last lawful sovereign, the injured Constantine the Sixth. This belief in the absolute continuity of the Empire is the key to the whole theory; but it is just the point by which so many readers and writers break down, and fail to take in the true character of the election of Charles as it seemed to the men of his own time. Never was the true aspect of the case more thoroughly understood and more vigorously set forth than it has been by Mr. Bryce. And few descriptions in the English language surpass his brilliant picture of the election and coronation of the first Teutonic Cæsar.

Thus was accomplished that revolution of which, in the West at least, no man had hitherto dared to dream. As yet no man of avowed barbarian blood had dared to assume the Imperial rank. Alaric, Ricimer, Chlodwig, Theodoric, Pippin himself, had never dared to call them-

* Chron. Moissiac, A. 801 (Pertz, Mon. Hist. Germ. i. 505): "Quum enim apud Romam nunc præfatus imperator moraretur, delati quidam sunt ad eum, dicentes quod apud Græcos nomen imperatoris cessâsset, et femina apud eos nomen imperii teneret, Herena nomine, quæ filium suum imperatorem fraude captum, oculos eruit, et sibi nomen imperii usurpavit, ut Atalia in libro Regum legitur fecisse. Audito, Leo papa et omnis conventus episcoporum et sacerdotum seu abbatum, et senatus Francorum et omnes majores natu Romanorum, cum reliquo Christiano populo consilium habuerunt, ut ipsum Carolum, regem Francorum, imperatorem nominare deberent, qui Romam matrem Imperii tenebat, ubi semper Cæsares et Imperatores sedere soliti fuerunt; et ne pagani insultarent Christianis, si imperatoris nomen apud Christianos cessâsset."

selves Emperors of the Romans. They might be Kings of their own people and Roman Consuls or Patricians, they might create or depose Emperors, but the Empire itself was beyond them. But now a man of Teutonic blood and speech was, by the election of the Old Rome, placed on her Imperial throne. The Frankish King became a Roman Cæsar. And, what should never be forgotten, he claimed, after his Imperial coronation, to reign not only as King but as Cæsar over the whole of his dominions. Those who had already sworn allegiance to the King were now called on afresh to swear allegiance to the Emperor. Thus was the dominion of Rome and her Emperor again formally extended, alike over large provinces which had been wrested from the Empire and over vast regions which the older Cæsars had never held. The Roman eagle was planted again on the banks of the Ebro, and planted for the first time on the banks of the Eider. When Germany swore allegiance to the new Augustus, the defeat of Varus might be thought to be avenged at the hands of one who, in blood and speech and manners, was the true successor of Arminius. If Greece led captive her Roman conqueror, Rome now still more truly led captive the barbarian who strove to hide, even from himself, the fact that he had conquered her.

All this, it is easy to say, was mere unreality and delusion. It is easy to argue that Charles was not a Roman Emperor in the same sense as Augustus, or even as Augustulus. With what right could he be called the successor of Constantine the Sixth, when the dominions of the two princes had hardly a square mile of ground in common, while the succession of Byzantine Emperors continued undisturbed, and while they bore sway even over some portions of Italy itself? Charles, it may be argued, was simply a Teutonic king, who satisfied a mere prejudice on the part of a portion of his subjects by assuming an empty title, a title which neither extended his rule over new dominions nor increased his prerogative within the old.

All this, no doubt, is true; it is obvious enough to us at the distance of a thousand years. But it was not obvious to men at the time. And, as men's actions in all ages have been governed, not by what, with further knowledge, they might have thought, but by what they actually did know and think, the assumption of the Imperial rank by Charles was neither unreal nor illusory, because it led to important practical results. In the eyes of all Charles's Italian subjects, probably in the eyes of many of his Gaulish subjects, the assumption of the Roman title made all the difference between lawful and unlawful dominion. The King of the Franks was a barbarian conqueror, or at best a barbarian deliverer; in the Emperor of the Romans men beheld the restorer of lawful and orderly government, after a long and violent interruption. Even in the eyes of his own Germans, Charles Augustus became, in some vague way, greater and holier than Charles the mere Frankish King. And in their exaltation of its prince the nation felt itself exalted also. The form of words did not as yet exist, but the West now saw again a Holy Roman Empire, and it was now a "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation."

This truth however was not as yet legally acknowledged; indeed it did not as yet exist in all its practical fulness. Charles was indeed a German king; but the possession of the Imperial crown by a German king did not identify the Imperial crown with the German nation in the same way that it did from the time of Otto the Great onward. The difference between the position of Charles and that of Otto is this. Otto was indeed the most powerful king of the West, but he was not the only king. The Imperial crown was annexed to the distinct local kingdom of the Eastern Franks, when it might conceivably have been annexed to the kingdom of the Burgundians, or even to the kingdom of the Western Franks. There thus arose, from Otto onwards, a direct connexion between the Roman Empire and Germany as

a distinct country and nation, one country and nation out of several possible competitors. But Charles had been far more than all this: he was not only the most powerful king, but he was in some sense the only king. He might claim to be Lord of the World in a truer sense than any Emperor after his son, in as true a sense as any Emperor since Theodosius. Setting aside our own island, which passed in some sort for another world, Charles was actually either the immediate sovereign or the suzerain lord of all Western Christendom. The East was indeed ruled by a second Cæsar, who might, according to circumstances, be looked on either as an Imperial rival, a Tetricus or a Carausius, or as an Imperial colleague, a Valens or an Arcadius. But the West was all his own. He ruled, and, after his Imperial coronation, he ruled distinctly as Roman Augustus, over all the lands from the Ocean and the Ebro to the Elbe and the Theiss. His frontiers were surrounded, as the frontiers of Rome were in ancient times, by a string of allied and tributary rulers, the antitypes of the Massinissas and the Herods. In such a dominion as this the mere Frankish nationality might well seem to be lost: Frank, Gaul, Burgundian, Italian, might seem to be alike subjects of Cæsar, or, if they better liked the title, citizens of Rome. Of course this appearance of universal dominion was delusive; but it was only in human nature that men should at the time be deluded by it.

But such an Empire as this needed the arm of Charles the Great himself to support it. One hardly knows whether it was in folly or in wisdom, because he saw not the consequences or because he saw that the consequences were unavoidable, that Charles laid down the principle of a division of his dominions among his sons. The Empire was still to be one and indivisible, but the Emperor was to reign only as the superior lord over several kings of his own house. Under Charles himself, his sons had reigned as kings over Italy and Aquitaine, and he had ever found

them his loyal vicegerents. Perhaps he hardly foresaw that the submission which was willingly yielded to a father, and such a father, would not be so willingly yielded to a brother, an uncle, or perhaps a distant cousin. Perhaps he saw that no hand but his own could keep his dominions together; that it was better to make the best of a sad necessity; that it was something to secure a nominal and theoretical unity through the vassalage of all the kings to the Imperial head of the family. Anyhow he had precedents enough, Roman and Frankish. He was only treading in the steps of Chlodwig and of Pippin, and he may well have thought that he was treading in the steps of Diocletian, Constantine, and Theodosius. At all events, from the death of Lewis the Pious, or rather from the death of Charles himself, a state of division begins; kings and Emperors rise and fall; the Empire is sometimes nominally, always practically, in abeyance. For one moment, under Charles the Fat, nearly the whole Empire is reunited; but, with his deposition in 888, the Eastern and the Western Franks, *Francia Teutonica* and *Francia Latina*—in modern language, Germany and France—are parted asunder for ever. Germany, West-France, Burgundy, Italy, become distinct kingdoms, ruled for the most part by kings who are not of the blood of the Great Charles. Through the first half of the ninth century, whenever there was an Emperor at all, instead of being Lord of the World, he was at most a King of Italy, with a very feeble hold indeed even on his peninsular kingdom.

Then came the revival under Otto the Great, the foundation of the Roman Empire under its latest form. The kingdoms of Germany and Italy were now united, and their common king, though he did not as yet assume the title, was, from the moment of his coronation at Aachen, Roman Emperor-elect, "Rex Romanorum in Cæsarem promovendus." Once only, on the extinction of the direct line of the Ottos, did Italy again strive to establish a real national king. Though Kings of Italy were once or twice

elected in later times in opposition to the reigning King or Emperor, they were discontented or rebellious princes of the Imperial house, who certainly had no mind to confine their rule to Italy, if they could extend it over Germany and Burgundy also. From the days of Otto the principle was gradually established that the chosen King of Germany acquired, as such, a right to the royal crowns of Italy and Burgundy* and to the Imperial crown of Rome. He was not Emperor till he had been crowned at Rome by the Roman Pontiff; but he, and no other, had a right to become Emperor. This was a state of things very different from the Empire of the first Cæsars, very different from the Empire of Charles, but it was still more widely different from the "phantom Empire," to use Mr. Bryce's words, of Guy and Berengar. The union of three out of the four Kingdoms into which the dominions of Charles had split, made the Empire, if not an universal monarchy, yet a power which had as yet no rival in Western Europe. France—modern, Celtic, Capetian, Parisian, France—looked exceedingly like a revolted province, a limb wrongfully cut off from the body of the Empire and from the sway of the successor of Charles. States of which the old Cæsars had never heard—Denmark, Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, owed a homage, more or less practical, to the Saxon, Frankish, or Swabian Augustus. The Holy Roman Empire had now assumed essentially the same form which it retained down to 1806; another distinct step had been taken towards making it the special heritage of the German nation.

It is at this point, the beginning of the Empire in its last shape, that Mr. Bryce stops to review the Imperial theory as it was understood in the Middle Ages. What that theory was we have already tried to set forth; but it should be borne in mind that the theory grew in clearness and fulness, and moreover that the more clearly men saw

* After the acquisition of the Kingdom of Burgundy in 1032. Mr. Bryce has an important note on the various uses of the word Burgundy, the most fluctuating and perplexing name in history.

that the existing Empire failed to answer their ideal conception, the more they went on to theorize about the ideal Empire. We may be sure that neither Otto the Great nor any man of his time could have set forth the Imperial creed in the distinct and elaborate shape into which it was thrown by Dante. Still the essential elements of the theory existed from the beginning. It was held, from the days of Otto, that the eternal fitness of things required an universal temporal and an universal spiritual chief of Christendom; it was held that those chiefs were to be looked for in the Roman Emperor and the Roman Pontiff; and lastly, it was held that the true Roman Emperor was to be looked for in the German King. No Emperor was ever so thoroughly imbued with these notions as Otto the Third, who seems to have seriously intended to make Rome, in fact as well as in name, the seat of his Empire, and thence to rule the world by the help of a Pontiff like-minded with himself. Of the schemes, or rather the visions, of this wonderful young prince, so sadly cut off in the days of his brightest promise, Mr. Bryce gives us an eloquent picture, which forms one of the gems of his book.

The union in one person of the incongruous functions of German King and Roman Emperor is a fact which Mr. Bryce sets forth with much power and clearness. He contrasts the two offices, "the one centralized, the other local; the one resting on a sublime theory, the other the rude offspring of anarchy; the one gathering all power into the hands of an irresponsible monarch, the other limiting his rights, and authorizing resistance to his commands; the one demanding the equality of all citizens as creatures equal before heaven, the other bound up with an aristocracy the proudest, and in its gradations of rank the most exact, that Europe had ever seen." He then goes on to show how these two conceptions were fused into a third different from either; how the Emperor-King strove to merge his kingship in his Empire; how the titles of German royalty were dropped for ages, so that Cæsar was held to rule as Cæsar

no less in Germany than in Italy; how again, by a natural interchange of thought, the idea of the Empire became mingled with feudal notions; how the Emperor became a Lord of the World, not as a direct ruler, like the old Cæsars, but as an universal suzerain, of whom local kings and dukes and commonwealths might hold as his vassals, while he himself held his Empire immediately of God alone. There can be no doubt that, in Germany itself, the effect of the union of the Kingdom with the Empire was the weakening and the final destruction of the royal power. The Germany of the Ottos and the Henries, divided and turbulent as it seems when compared with modern centralized states, was actually the most united power in Western Europe, incomparably more united than contemporary England or France. The whole later history of Germany is simply a history of the steps by which this once united realm fell to pieces. The King gradually lost all real power, and yet he remained to the last surrounded by a halo of outward reverence beyond all other kings. The full examination of the causes of these phænomena belongs to German history. But it cannot be doubted that the chief cause of all was the fact that the German King was also Roman Emperor. It was not only that their Italian claims and titles led the German Kings into never-ending Italian wars, to the neglect of true German interests. This outward and palpable cause had doubtless a good deal to do with the matter; but this was by no means all. The true causes lie deeper. The Emperor, Lord of the World, became, like the supreme deities of some mythologies, too great to act with effect as the local king of a national kingdom. His local kingship was forgotten. The Emperors strove to merge their kingship in the Empire, and they did merge it in the Empire, though in an opposite way from that which they had intended. They would reign as Emperors and not as Kings, meaning to reign as Emperors with more absolute and undisputed power. They did reign as Emperors and not as Kings,

because the Imperial power was found to be practically far less effective than the royal power. The Emperor, Lord of the World, exercised only a most vague and nominal supremacy beyond the limits of his own kingdoms; why, now that he reigned as Cæsar rather than as King, should Cæsar claim any more effective authority over Germany, Burgundy, and Italy, than he held over Gaul or Spain or Britain? He was Emperor alike in all lands; why should his jurisdiction, nominal in one land, be any more practical in another? Thus, because their suzerain was of greater dignity than all other suzerains, did the vassal princes of Germany obtain a more complete independence than the vassal princes of any other realm. Again, the Empire was in its own nature elective. Mere kingdoms or duchies, mere local sovereignties, might pass from father to son like private estates; but the Empire, the chieftainship of Christendom, the temporal vicarship of God upon earth, could not be exposed to the chances of hereditary succession; it must remain as the loftiest of prizes, the fitting object of ambition for the worthiest of Roman citizens, that is, now, for all baptized men above the rank of a serf. The practical effect of this splendid theory was that, while the crowns of England and France became hereditary, the crown of Germany, as inseparable from the Empire, became purely elective.* Then followed the consequences which, in any but a very early state of society, are sure to follow on the establishment of a purely elective kingship. Each Emperor, uncertain whether he would be able to transmit his dignity to his son, thought more of the aggrandizement of his family than of maintaining the dignity of his crown. Escheated or forfeited fiefs, which in France would have gone to swell the royal domain, were employed in Germany to provide principalities for children whose succession

* Of course the old Teutonic law, in Germany and everywhere else, was election out of one royal family, but in England and France the hereditary element in this system grew at the expense of the elective, while in Germany the process was reversed.

to anything higher was uncertain. The election of each Emperor was commonly purchased by concessions to the Electors, and if an Emperor was so lucky as to procure the election of his son as King of the Romans during his lifetime, that special favour was purchased by further concessions still. The Empire sank to such a degree of poverty that it became absolutely necessary to elect a prince whose hereditary dominions were large enough to enable him to maintain his Imperial rank. Such princes made their hereditary dominions their first object, and retreated altogether to their hereditary capitals, sometimes beyond the limits of Roman or German dominion. Italy fell away; Burgundy was gradually swallowed up by France. The Holy Roman Empire was cut down to a German Kingdom, whose very royalty was little more than a pageant. As if in some desperate hope of reviving the royal authority, Maximilian revived the royal title,* almost forgotten since the days of Otto. And by a strange but inevitable reaction, the crown which had become purely elective became from this time practically hereditary. The form of election was never dropped, but chief after chief of the Austrian house was chosen, because national feeling revolted from choosing a stranger, while no other German prince could be found equal to bearing the burthen. Thus both the Roman Empire and the German Kingdom came to be looked on as part of the heritage of the House of Austria.† From Charles the Fifth onwards, the Roman Emperor was again a mighty prince, but his might was neither as Roman Emperor nor as German King. The Emperor-King, with his Kingdom and his Empire, sank, as we have already

* The old titles, "Rex Orientalium Francorum," etc., were gradually dropped under the Ottos. Henceforth the Emperor, though crowned at Aachen and sometimes at Arles, took no title but "Imperator" or "Rex Romanorum." Maximilian restored the ancient style under the form of "Rex Germaniæ," "König in Germanien." This description was common in the ninth century, though it was not used as a formal title.

† The election of Charles the Seventh of Bavaria was no exception. He claimed the Austrian succession.

said, to be the president of one of the laxest of federal bodies.

Thus it was that the acquisition of the Imperial dignity crushed and broke up the ancient kingdom of the Eastern Franks. Yet the influence of that splendid possession was not wholly destructive. It preserved in the very act of weakening. The Imperial idea was like the ivy which first makes a wall ruinous, and then keeps it from falling. The possession of Empire in every way lessened the real power and influence of the Kingdom, but it insured its existence. We may be sure that any other kingdom whose king retained so little real authority as the King of Germany would have fallen asunder far sooner than Germany did. But the King of Germany was also the Roman Emperor; as such he was surrounded by an atmosphere of vague majesty beyond all other kings; he was the object of a mysterious reverence, which did not hinder his vassals from robbing him of all effectual prerogatives, but which kept them back from the very thought of formally abolishing his office. The Roman Empire, as far as any real power or dignity was concerned, was buried in the grave of Frederick the Wonder of the World. But its ghost lingered on for five hundred and fifty years. Cæsar survived the Interregnum; he survived the Golden Bull; he survived the Reformation; he survived the Peace of Westphalia. The Roman Emperors, powerful as heads of the Austrian House, became, as Kings and Cæsars, almost as vain a pageant as a Merowingian King or an Abbasside Caliph of Egypt. The temporal head of Christendom saw half of his own kingdom fall away into heresy. He saw his vassals, great and small, assume all the rights of independent sovereigns. He saw cities and provinces fall away one by one, some assuming perfect republican independence,* some swallowed up by royal or revolutionary

* The Confederations of Switzerland and the United Provinces, whose independence of the Empire, practically established long before, was not formally recognized till 1648.

France. But the frail bark which carried Cæsar and his fortunes still kept on its course amid so many contending blasts. It was only when the magic spell of the name of Empire was dissolved by the rise of upstart and rival Emperors, that the fabric at last gave way. The assumption of the Imperial title by the Muscovite was the first step, but this alone did but little. The Russian Empire might be looked upon as in some vague way representing the Empire of Byzantium, or its sovereign might be spoken of as Emperor according to that rough analogy which confers the Imperial title on the barbaric princes of China and Morocco. It was not till a rival appeared close on its own ground that the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation fell utterly asunder. Side by side with the Emperor of the Romans suddenly arose an "Emperor of the French," giving himself out, with consummate but plausible impudence, as the true successor of the Great Charles. The kingdom of Italy, almost forgotten since the days of the Hohenstaufen, arose again to place a new diadem on the same presumptuous brow. A King of Rome, a title unheard of since the days of Tarquin, next appeared, as if to mock the long line of German "Reges Romanorum." The assumption of the Imperial title by Buonaparte was met by Francis the Second in a way which showed that he must almost have forgotten his own existence. He, the King of Germany and Roman Emperor-elect, could find no better means to put himself on a level with the Corsican usurper than to add to his style the monstrous, ludicrous, and meaningless addition of "Hereditary Emperor of Austria."* An hereditary Emperor of

* "*Erb*kaiser von Oesterreich," as distinguished from "*erwählter* römischer Kaiser." This, as Mr. Bryce remarks, besides its absurdity in other ways, implies a complete forgetfulness of the meaning of the word "*erwählter*." The title of "*erwählter* römischer Kaiser," "Romanorum imperator *electus*," was introduced by Maximilian, under papal sanction, to express what hitherto had been expressed by "Rex Romanorum in Cæsarem promovendus," that is, a prince elected at Frankfurt and crowned at Aachen (latterly crowned at Frankfurt also), but not yet Emperor, because not yet crowned at Rome by the

Lichtenstein would have seemed no greater absurdity in the eyes of Charles or Otto or Frederick. When it had come to this, it was time that the old titles of Rome and Germany should pass away. As the elective King had made himself an hereditary Emperor, Dukes and Electors thought they had an equal right to make themselves hereditary Kings. Their new-fangled Majesties and Highnesses revolted against their renegade overlord, and found a willing protector west of the Rhine. The Roman Empire and the German Kingdom were now no more; the foreign Emperor declared that he did not recognize their existence,* and its own Imperial chief proclaimed the final dissolution of the creation of Augustus, Charles, and Otto, in a document in which, after the formal enumeration of his own now degraded titles, the name of Rome does not occur.†

We have thus hurried through a period of more than eight hundred years, the revolutions of which are set forth by Mr. Bryce with singular clearness and power. He brings forth in its due prominence the great reign of Henry the Third, the moment when the Empire reached its highest pitch of real power. This was followed by the

Pope. This was the condition of all the Emperors since Charles the Fifth, none of whom were crowned by the Pope. They were therefore only "Emperors-elect," just like a Bishop-elect, one, that is, chosen, but not yet consecrated. But when "*Erb*kaiser" could be opposed to "*erwählter* Kaiser," it was clear that people fancied that *erwählter* meant, not "elect," but *elective* as opposed to hereditary. In short, Francis the Second seems to have altogether forgotten who and what he was.

In the Peace of Pressburg, in 1805, the Emperor is called throughout "Empereur d'Allemagne et d'Autriche;" in the heading he is "Kaiser von Oesterreich" only.

* See the addition made by Buonaparte to the Act of Confederation of the Rhine: "Sa Majesté . . . ne reconnoît plus l'existence de la constitution germanique."

† The form used throughout is "deutsches Reich." But the titles run as of old, "erwählter römischer Kaiser," "König in Germanien," etc.; only the new-fashioned "Erbkaiser von Oesterreich" is thrust in between them. Even the "zu allen Zeiten Mehrer des Reichs," the old ludicrous mistranslation of "semper Augustus," is not left out in the document which proclaims the Empire to have come to an end.

struggles between the spiritual and temporal powers under his son and grandson, which showed how vain was the theory which expected the Roman Cæsar and the Roman Pontiff to pull together in harmony. But Mr. Bryce's highest enthusiasm centres round the great House of Swabia. He gives us a brilliant picture of the reign of Frederick Barbarossa, into whose real character and position we need hardly say that he fully enters. On the reign of his grandson, "Fridericus stupor mundi et innovator mirabilis," Mr. Bryce is less full and less eloquent than we should have expected; but he clearly points out the importance of his reign as an epoch in Imperial history, and marks out boldly the fact that "with Frederick fell the Empire." The Empire, in short, from Rudolf onwards, is a revival, something analogous to the Empire of the Palaiologoi at Constantinople. Internal disorganization had done in the Western Empire what foreign conquest had done in the Eastern. Rudolf, Adolf, Albert, were mere German kings; they never crossed the Alps to assume either the golden crown of Rome or the iron crown of Monza. With Henry the Seventh we reach a new period, or rather his reign seems like a few years transported onwards from an earlier time. The revival of classical learning had given a revived impulse to the Imperial idea, just as the revival of the Civil Law had done at an earlier time. Of the ideas with which men then looked upon the Empire, Dante, in his work *De Monarchia*, is the great exponent. It must not be thought for a moment that Dante's subject is monarchy, in the common sense of the word, royal government as opposed to aristocracy or democracy. With him *Monarchia* is synonymous with *Imperium*. There may be many kings and princes, but there is only one *Monarch*, one universal chief, the Roman Emperor. He proves elaborately, in the peculiar style of reasoning current in that age, that an universal monarch is necessary, that the Roman Emperor is of right the universal monarch, that the Emperor does not hold his

crown of the Pope, but immediately of God alone. But he has not a word of argument to show that the German King is really the Roman Emperor; that is assumed as a matter of course; there was no need to prove, because nobody doubted, that whatever belonged of right to Augustus Cæsar belonged of right to his lawful successor, Henry of Lützelburg. On this branch of the argument—one which, to our notions, stood quite as much in need of proof as any of the others—Dante does not vouchsafe a single line. The illusion survived untouched.

We have not room to follow Mr. Bryce through all the stages of the later German history, when the Empire had lost all Roman and Imperial character, when the Emperor was again a mere German King, or rather a mere President of a German Confederation. The steps by which Germany sank from a kingdom into a confederation have an interest of their own, but it is one which more closely touches federal than Imperial history. Germany is, as far as we know, the only example of a confederation which arose, not out of the union of elements before distinct, but out of the dissolution of a formerly existing kingdom. From the Peace of Westphalia—we might almost say from the Interregnum onwards—the Imperial historian has little more to do than to watch the strange and blind affection with which men clave to the mere name of what had once been great and glorious. And yet we have seen that even that name was not without its practical effect. If, in Mr. Bryce's emphatic words, "the German Kingdom broke down beneath the weight of the Roman Empire," it was certainly the name of the Roman Empire which hindered the severed pieces from altogether flying asunder. And the recollection of the Empire works still in modern politics, though we fear more for evil than for good. Patriotic Germans indeed look back with a sigh to the days when Germany was great and united under her Ottos and her Henries, but these are remembrances of the Kingdom rather than of the Empire. The memory of the Empire is mainly used in modern

times to prop up the position of the two upstart powers which now venture to profane the Imperial title. Because Gaul was once a German province, the Lord of Paris* would have us believe that the successor of Charles is to be found among a people who in the days of the great Emperor had no national being. Because certain Austrian dukes were chosen Roman Emperors, we are called upon, sometimes to condemn the great Frederick as a forerunner of Francis Joseph, sometimes to justify Francis Joseph as a successor of the great Frederick. We will wind up with the fervid and eloquent comments of Mr. Bryce on this latter head. A more vigorous denunciation of the great Austrian imposture we have seldom come across:—

"Austria has indeed, in some things, but too faithfully reproduced the policy of the Saxon and Swabian Cæsars. Like her, they oppressed and insulted the Italian people; but it was in the defence of rights which the Italians themselves admitted. Like her, they lusted after a dominion over the races on their borders, but that dominion was to them a means of spreading civilization and religion in savage countries, not of pampering upon their revenues a hated court and aristocracy. Like her, they strove to maintain a strong government at home, but they did it when a strong government was the first of political blessings. Like her, they gathered and maintained vast armies; but those armies were composed of knights and barons who lived for war alone, not of peasants torn away from useful labour, and condemned to the cruel task of perpetuating their own bondage by crushing the aspirations of another nationality. They sinned grievously, no doubt, but they sinned in the dim twilight of a half-barbarous age, not in the noonday blaze of modern civilization. The enthusiasm for mediæval faith and simplicity which was so fervid some years ago, has run its course, and is not likely soon to revive. He who reads the history of the Middle Ages will not deny that its heroes, even the best of them, were in some respects little better than savages. But when he approaches more recent times, and sees how, during the last three hundred years, kings have dealt with their subjects, and with each other, he will forget the ferocity of the Middle Ages, in horror at the heartlessness, the treachery, the injustice, all the more odious because it sometimes wears the mask of legality, which disgraces the annals of the military monarchies of Europe. With regard, however, to the pretensions of modern Austria, the truth is that this dispute about the worth of the old system has no bearing upon them at all. The day of Imperial greatness was already past when Rudolf the first Hapsburg reached the throne; while during what may be called the Austrian period, from Maximilian to Francis II., the Holy Empire was to Germany a mere clog and encumbrance, which the unhappy nation bore because she knew not how to rid herself of it.

* [1865.]

The Germans are welcome to appeal to the old Empire to prove that they were once a united people. Nor is there any harm in their comparing the politics of the twelfth century with those of the nineteenth, although to argue from the one to the other seems to betray a want of historical judgment. But the one thing which is wholly absurd is to make Francis Joseph of Austria the successor of Frederick of Hohenstaufen, and justify the most sordid and ungenial of modern despotisms by the example of the mirror of mediæval chivalry, the noblest creation of mediæval thought."*

* [I let Mr. Bryce's words and my own stand as they were first written. Since then we have seen the "sordid and ungenial despotism" scourged by a wholesome defeat into an honourable place in Europe. We have seen the tyrant of Hungary changed into her lawful king. We have seen Italy enlarged and strengthened by the deliverance of Venice and of Rome. We have seen the rod of the oppressor broken; the power which has been so long the disturbing element in Europe has at last been crushed, and instead of the frontier of France being extended to the Rhine, the frontier of Germany has been again extended to the Mosel. The unity of the greater part of Germany has been secured, and, by a pardonable confusion of ideas, the Imperial title has been assumed by the chief of the united nation. I need not show that such a title is in strictness inaccurate, but it would be hard to find a title more appropriate than that of Emperor for the head of a Confederation of kings and other princes. The new German Empire is a fair revival of the old German Kingdom, but it must be borne in mind that it is in no sense a revival of the Holy Roman Empire. That has passed away for ever.] [1871.]

VII.

THE FRANKS AND THE GAULS.

We think it right, at the beginning of this Article, to tell our readers exactly what we are going to talk about, and what we are not. We are not going to plunge into any antiquarian minutiæ about the settlement of the Franks in Gaul, or to perplex ourselves and our readers with any questions as to Leudes, Antrustions, and Scabini. Still less are we about to enter on the disputed ground of Gaulish or British ethnology, to trace out the exact line of demarcation between the Gael and the Cymry, or to decide the exact relations of the Belgæ either to them or to their Teutonic neighbours. What we wish to do is to pass rapidly through the whole history of Gaul and France, from the earliest times down to our own day. We wish to take a general survey of Gaulish and Frankish history from a point of view which is not commonly understood, but which is well suited to throw an important light alike upon the history of remote ages and upon the latest events of our own day. The past and the present are for ever connected; but the kind of connexion which exists between them differs widely in different cases. Past history and modern politics are always influencing one another; but the forms which their mutual influence takes are infinitely varied. Sometimes the business of the historian is to point out real connexions and real analogies which the world at large does not perceive. This is most conspicuously his duty in dealing with what is called the "ancient" history of Greece and Italy, and, to a large extent also, in dealing with the early and mediæval history of our own island. Sometimes, on the other hand, it is his duty

to upset false connexions and false analogies, which have not only misled historical students, but have often exercised a most baneful influence upon public affairs. This is his primary duty when dealing with the history of Gaul and France. It is something to show that the old history of Athens and Rome is no assemblage of lifeless chronicles, but the truest textbook for the real statesman of every age. It is something to show that the England of our own times is in every important respect one and the same with the England of our earliest being. But it is something no less valuable to break down false assumptions which pervert the truth of history, and which enable designing men to throw a false colour over unprincipled aggressions. If it is worth our while to show that Queen Victoria is in every sense the true successor of Cerdic and Ælfred and Edward the First, it is no less worth our while to show that Louis Napoleon Buonaparte is in no conceivable sense the successor of Clovis* and of Charles the Great.

There is perhaps nothing which people in general find more difficult to master than the science of historical geography. Few men indeed there are who fully take in the way in which nations have changed their places, and countries have changed their boundaries. We say "fully take in" because the facts are continually known in a kind of way, when there is no sort of living grasp of them. People know things and, so to speak, do not act upon their knowledge. Almost everybody has heard, for instance, of the succession of "the Britons" and "the Saxons" in this island. A man knows in a kind of way that "the Saxons" are his own forefathers, and that they drove "the Britons" into a corner; but he does not fully take in the fact that these "Britons" and "Saxons" are simply Welshmen and Englishmen. When Dr. Guest, like a good and accurate

* [I seem, eleven years back, to have kept this absurd form of the name. The two names being exactly the same, if we do not write *Hlodwig* or something like it, it would be better to write *Lewis* from the very beginning.] [1871.]

scholar, talks of "the English" in the fifth and sixth centuries, to most ears it sounds like a paradox.* In the meanwhile, the most unmistakeable Teutons will talk glibly about "our British ancestors," and see no absurdity in the title of Haydon's picture of "Alfred and the first British Jury." In the same way men have a sort of notion that Gaul is the "ancient name" of France, and France the "modern name" of Gaul. A man sees "Charlemagne" called "King of France," and he thinks that the France of Charlemagne is the same as the France of Lewis the Fourteenth or of either Buonaparte. One cause of the evil is doubtless the want of proper historical maps. Every household does not boast a copy of Spruner's Hand-Atlas. People are set to read the history of the world with two sets of maps. One is to serve from Adam to Theodoric or to Charles the Fifth—we are not quite sure which; the other, from Theodoric or Charles the Fifth to the year 1860. They sit down to read about John and Philip Augustus either with a map of Roman Gaul or with a map of Napoleonic France. Now, if you want to find the homes of the Twelve Peers of France, it is no light matter to do so when you have to choose between a map showing you only Lugdunensis and Germania Prima and a map showing you only the departments of Gironde and of Ille and Vilaine. People read of the return of Richard Cœur-de-Lion from the East, how he falls into the hands of the Duke of Austria, and is presently passed over into those of the "Emperor of Germany." This Duke and this Emperor are persons not a little mysterious to those whose only idea of "Austria" is something which takes in Venetia at the one end and Transsilvania at the other. If a man in this state of mind came across a copy of Eginhard, and found Mainz, Köln, and Trier spoken of as cities of *Francia*, he would think that he had hit upon an irrefragable argument in favour of the claims of Paris to the frontier of the Rhine. A "King of France" once reigned upon the Elbe, the

* [I trust that it is not so great a paradox in 1871 as it was in 1860.]

Danube, the Tiber, and the Ebro! A patriotic Frenchman would trumpet the discovery abroad as the greatest of triumphs; a patriotic Englishman might perhaps be inclined to hide so dangerous a light under the nearest bushel. Our business just now is to show that the fact tells quite the other way, so far as it tells any way at all. If any inference in modern politics is to be drawn from the phænomena of mediæval geography, they would certainly rather prove the right of Maximilian of Bavaria to the frontier of the Atlantic than the right of Napoleon of Paris to the frontier of the Rhine.

We will begin by admitting, if it is needful for anybody either to assert or to deny the fact, that modern France is, beyond all doubt, connected with ancient Gaul in a way in which modern England is not connected with ancient Britain. There can be no question that the predominant blood in modern France is not that of the invading Franks, but that of the conquered Gallo-Romans; while in England the predominant blood is not that of the conquered Britons, but that of the invading Angles and Saxons. The truth is that the Frankish conquest of Gaul must, of the two, have been more analogous to the Norman than to the English conquest of our own country. The Frank in Gaul and the Norman in England were predominant for a season; but in the end the smaller and foreign element died out, and left Gaul once more Gaul and England once more England. In fact, England still retains more traces of the Norman than France does of the Frank. The Romance infusion into our Teutonic speech is far more extensive than the Teutonic infusion into the Romance speech of Gaul. The main difference is that Gaul or part of it has changed its name to France, while England has not changed its name to Normandy. This was doubtless, among other causes, owing to the more settled condition of states and nations in the eleventh century as compared with the sixth, and to the fact that William of Normandy claimed to be, not the unprovoked invader of England, but the lawful inheritor of her crown. But, on

the other hand, Gaul has never, even in name, so thoroughly become France as Britain has become England. This may sound strange at first hearing, because "Briton" and "British" are now such household words to express ourselves; but their use in that sense is extremely modern; it has simply come in from the necessity, constant in political language and frequent elsewhere, of having some name to take in alike England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. So lately as James the Second's time, a Briton still meant a Welshman;* and we believe that exactly a century back, the famous declaration of George the Third that he "gloried in the name," not of Englishman, but "of Briton," was looked upon by many of his subjects as a wicked device of the Scotchman Bute. To this day "England" and "Englishman" are the words which always first occur to us in the language either of every-day discourse or of the rhetoric of the heart. The word "Britain," in the mouth of an Englishman, is reserved either for artificial poetry, for the dialect of foreign politics, or for the conciliation of Scottish hearers. Before England and Scotland were united, the name "Briton," as including Englishmen, was altogether unheard of; but the name "Gaul" has never fully died out as the designation of France. How does the case stand in the tongue which was so long the common speech of Europe? The most pedantic Ciceronian never scrupled to talk familiarly about *Anglus* and *Anglia*; but *Francus* and *Francia* are hardly known except in language more or less formal. *Gallus, Gallia, Galliarum Rex*, are constantly used by writers who would never think of an analogous use of *Britannus* and *Britannia*. In ecclesiastical matters, Gaul has always remained even the formal designation. The Gallican Church answers to the Anglican, the Primate of all the Gauls to the Primate of all England. And if it be said that the reason

* As in the ballad quoted by Lord Macaulay:

"Both our Britons are fooled,
Who the laws overruled,
And next Parliament both shall be plaguily schooled."

The "Britons" are the Welshmen Jeffreys and Williams.

is that England is not coextensive with Britain, neither, we are happy to say, is France even yet coextensive with Gaul. If Britain includes Scotland as well as England, Gaul includes Belgium and Switzerland as well as France. The difference of expression merely sets forth the truth of the case. France is still really Gaulish; England is in no sense British, except in a sense lately introduced for political convenience.

If we turn to a map of the Roman Empire, we shall find in the West of Europe the great province of Gaul, whose extent, as we have hinted in the last paragraph, was far larger than that of modern France. Its boundaries are the Ocean, the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Rhine. It includes the modern states of France, Switzerland, and Belgium, the lately plundered Duchy of Savoy, and portions of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and of the German states of Prussia, Bavaria, and Hessen. And then, as now, the division was geographical, and not national. As France now forms the greatest part, but far from the whole, of the ancient province, so in those days men of Celtic blood occupied the greater part, but not the whole, of geographical Gaul. The German dwelled then, as now, on both sides of the Rhine. The Basque dwelled then, as now, in Aquitaine, though his tongue has now shrunk up into a much narrower corner of the land than it then occupied. Now the only claim of modern France to the Rhine frontier is that the Rhine was the frontier of ancient Gaul. But why should one of the states into which ancient Gaul is divided thus claim to be the representative of the whole? There is no reason, save that of their relative strength, why France should, on geographical principles, annex Belgium or Switzerland, rather than Belgium or Switzerland annex France. If the Parisii claim to reach to the Rhine as the eastern frontier of Gaul, the Helvetii may just as well claim to reach to the Atlantic, as being no less undoubtedly its western frontier. And, on this sort of reasoning, why stop at the Alps? why be satisfied with Savoy and Nizza? What are Lombardy and

Romagna but fragments feloniously cut off from the great Gallic whole? They came as much within the limits of the Gaul of Cæsar as Paris itself. Cæsar spent his winters at Lucca without leaving his province. He had got some way into the present Papal territory before he violated the sacred limits of Roman Italy.* Geographical necessities and natural boundaries may, in the mouth of a despot, mean whatever he pleases; but we really do not see why every argument in favour of the French claim to the frontier of the Rhine would not tell just as strongly in favour of a French claim to the frontier of the Rubico.

The truth is, that, though modern France does represent ancient Gaul, so far as that the old Gaulish blood is predominant in the veins of the modern Frenchman, still the connexion is purely geographical and ethnological; modern France is in no political or historical sense the representative of ancient Gaul. France, in short, in the modern sense of the word, the monarchy of Paris, has no continuous existence earlier than the tenth century; it has no existence at all earlier than the ninth. Parisian France has been in Gaul what Wessex has been in England, what England has been in Britain, what Castile has been in Spain, what Sweden has been in Scandinavia, what Prussia has been in Germany and Sardinia in Italy; that is, it is one state among several, which has risen to greater importance than any of its fellows, and which has gradually swallowed up many of them into its own substance. The Kings of Paris gradually united to their domain nearly all the territories of their nominal vassals, and a vast territory besides which never owed them so much as a formal homage. So have the Kings of Castile done in the Spanish peninsula; so is the Sardinian monarchy doing before our

* [It is half a privilege, half a penalty, to live in an age when states and nations are making themselves new boundaries. When I wrote this article, the Bishop of Rome was a temporal prince reigning on both coasts of the now liberated peninsula. Piedmont was just beginning to grow into Italy. I leave every word relating to Italy as it was first written.] [1871.]

own eyes in Italy. There is of course one wide difference between the cases: Italy is being annexed to Sardinia by its own free will, while, in the Spanish peninsula, Portugal has not the least wish to be again incorporated with Castile and Aragon, and, in Gaul, the free states of Belgium and Switzerland have still less longing to be swallowed up by the despotism of Paris. Otherwise, for Sardinia to annex any Italian state by fraud or conquest or the mere award of foreign powers would be as much opposed to justice as the annexation of Portugal by Spain, or of Belgium by France. The thing which men have so much difficulty in understanding is that modern France is a power which really has risen in this way. The existence of France in its modern extent, or nearly so, is assumed as something almost existing in the eternal fitness of things. The name of France, a mere fluctuating political expression for a territory which has grown and which may again diminish,* is used as if it had a permanent physical meaning, like the names Spain or Italy. To speak of a time when Lyons and Marseilles were no parts of France would seem to many people as great a paradox as to speak of a time when Rome was no part of the Italian peninsula. People know in a way, but they do not fully take in, that Rouen, Poitiers, and Toulouse were once the seats of sovereigns whose allegiance to the Parisian King was at least as loose as that of Frederick of Prussia to the Austrian Emperor; still less do they take in that Provence, Dauphiny, Franche Comté, Lorraine, and Elsass were all—some of them till very lately—as absolutely independent of the crown of France as they were of the crown of Russia. There was no reason in the nature of things why, not France, but Aquitaine, or Toulouse, or Burgundy, might not have risen to the supremacy in Gaul, any more than there was why Saxony or Bavaria might not have risen to the place in Germany now held by Prussia.

* [I had but faint hopes then of seeing Elsass and Lothringen won back again.] [1871.]

This sort of geographical and historical confusion is very much aided by one or two peculiarities in modern diplomatic language. When Louis Napoleon Buonaparte first expressed his wish to become master of Savoy, the word selected for the occasion was the verb "révendiquer," and the actual process of annexation was expressed by the noun "réunion," and the verb "réunir." At first sight this seems very much as if a burglar who asked for your money or your life should be said to "révendiquer" the contents of your purse, and afterwards to effect a "réunion" between them and the contents of his own. According to all etymology, "*ré*vendiquer" must mean to claim back again something which you have lost, and "*ré*union" must mean the joining together of things which have been separated after being originally one. Now undoubtedly, in modern French usage, the particle "re" has lost its natural force, and "réunion" has come simply to mean "union." But, first of all, foreigners may indeed get to *know*, but they can hardly get to *realize* this; you may know the construing in the dictionary, but you cannot get rid of the instinctive impression that "*ré*vendiquer" and "*ré*union" imply the recovery of something lost, most probably of something unjustly lost. "La réunion de Savoie" will always seem to an Englishman to mean that Savoy was a natural part of France unjustly dissevered from it. If Savoy remains annexed to France for the next hundred years, people will begin to look on it as they have already learned to look upon the "réunion" of Lorraine in the last century and upon the earlier "réunions" of Provence and Lyons. And one can hardly doubt that the twofold meaning of the word, its etymological sense and its modern Parisian sense, has been purposely made use of as a blind by French diplomatists. They tell us that they use the word merely in its modern Parisian sense; but they know very well that many people now, and still more hereafter, will instinctively interpret it in its natural meaning. And secondly, it is a most speaking fact that "réunion" should in any language have come to mean the

same as "union." It could only have come to do so in the language of a country where a long series of fraudulent or violent "unions" had been ingeniously passed off as lawful "réunions."

The truth is that, while all nations have a tendency to annexation, France stands alone in the art of veiling the ugly features of annexation by various ingenious devices. France is not more guilty in this matter than Russia, Prussia, Austria, Turkey, or Spain; indeed we cannot venture to profess that our own English hands are altogether clean. But France stands distinguished from them all by her power of putting a good name on a bad business. A Russian or Austrian aggression is simply an aggression of brute force; it is defended by the aggressor, if he condescends to defend it at all, simply on grounds of political expediency. Austria does not retain Venetia for the good of the Venetians, or because the hand of nature has marked out Venetia as a necessary portion of her dominions. She has simply got it, and means, if she can, to keep what she has got. But a French aggression is quite another business. There is always some elaborate reason for it. French ingenuity never lacks a theory for anything. A country is annexed in the interests of French versions of physical geography, of French notions of what has been, or French notions of what ought to be. France "wars for an idea;" an idea, it may be, either of past history or of anticipated futurity. Treaties are broken, legal rights are trampled under foot, natural justice is cast to the winds; but there is a good reason for every step. French cleverness is alike apt at proving the doctrine that the annexed people ought to desire annexation, and the fact that they actually do desire it. In short, while Austria acts as a mere vulgar and brutal highwayman, France better likes the character of an elegant, plausible, and ingenious swindler. The tendency is not new. Lewis the Eleventh had much to say for himself when he seized on Provence and the Duchy of Burgundy, and Philip Augustus extemporized a tribunal

and a jurisprudence in order to put himself into lawful possession of Normandy and Anjou.

Another means by which a false light is thrown upon the successive aggressions of France arises out of the familiar and almost universal use of the French language. We are so much more familiar with French than with any other tongue, French has become to so great an extent our medium of communication with other nations, that we have got into a way of speaking of half the cities of Europe, not by their own names, but by French corruptions. The custom is quite recent; in the sixteenth century Englishmen spoke of a German, Flemish, or Italian town either by its real German, Flemish, or Italian name, or else by some corruption of their own making. Now our habit of calling all places by French names greatly softens the ugliness of French aggression. *Alsace* sounds as if it had been a French province from all eternity; the Teutonic *Elsass* suggests ideas altogether different. The "réunion" of *Nice* may a generation or two hence sound quite natural, but that of *Nizza* would retain its native ugliness to all time. Cologne, Mayence, and Trèves sound as if they positively invited annexation; so do Liége, Malines, and Louvain; and it is no wonder that people think that Charles the Great was a Frenchman when they find his tomb at such a French-sounding place as Aix-la-Chapelle. But Köln, Mainz, Trier, and Aachen would, by their very names, stand up as so many bulwarks against Parisian aggression. For at least eight hundred years past Frenchmen have been incapable of spelling rightly any single name in any foreign language; but it is not at all unlikely that the incapacity may now and then have not been without a sound political motive.

We will now return to our geographical survey, which we have perhaps somewhat irregularly interrupted. Some time back we drew a map of ancient Gaul as a province of the Roman Empire. In the days of the great Teutonic migration, when East-Goths poured into Italy, West-Goths

into Spain, Vandals into Africa, Angles and Saxons into Britain, the kindred nation of the Franks appeared in Gaul. Everybody knows that France is so called from the Franks; but people are apt to forget that France is not the only country which is called from them. *France* and *Franconia* are etymologically the same word; the difference in their modern forms simply comes from a wish to avoid confusion, a confusion which was avoided in early mediæval Latin by speaking of *Francia occidentalis* and *Francia orientalis*, *Francia Latina* and *Francia Teutonica*. The difference between the two is that the Frank of France was a settler in a strange land, while the Frank of Franconia remained in the land of his fathers, that the Frank of France ere long degenerated into something half Roman, half Celtic, while the Frank of Franconia has ever remained an uncontaminated Teuton. In short, the Franks conquered Gaul, but without forsaking Germany; and they conquered different parts of Gaul in widely different senses and degrees. In Northern Gaul, to a certain extent, they settled. Orleans, Paris, Soissons, and Metz became the seats of Frankish kingdoms; but in the southern provinces of Aquitaine and Burgundy they hardly settled at all. There other Teutonic conquerors had been before them. The Goth reigned at Toulouse, and the Burgundian had given his name to the land between the Rhone and the Alps. Both were in a certain sense conquered. The orthodox zeal of the newly-converted Merwing formed a good pretext for driving the Arian out of Gaul. The Gothic monarchy had to retire beyond the Pyrenees, and the Burgundian kingdom for a while "ceased to exist." But the conquest was at most a political one. Southern Gaul was brought into a more or less complete subjection to the Frankish kings, but it never really became part of the true Frankish territory. There was no permanent Frankish population south of the Loire, and, as the Merowingian dynasty declined, Aquitaine again became to all intents and purposes an independent state. Under Pippin we find a Duke of Aquitaine who has to

be conquered just as much as any prince of Lombardy or Saxony. In truth, to this day Aquitaine and France proper have absolutely nothing in common, except the old Roman element and the results of their political union during the last four hundred years. The Teutonic element is different in the two lands, and, in a large district at least, the aboriginal element is different also. The Frenchman is formed by the infusion of the Frank upon the Celt, the Gascon is formed by the infusion of the Goth upon the Basque. Both speak tongues derived from that of Rome, but the difference passes the limits of mere difference of dialect. The arrogance of modern Paris talks indeed of the "bad French" of Aquitaine and Provence. In its ignorant pride, it can see only a *patois* of itself in a tongue which is as distinct as that of Spain or Italy, and which was a formed and polished speech, the speech of the refined courts of Poitiers and Toulouse, while northern France had still only an unformed and unwritten jargon.

We thus see that the dominions of the Kings of the Franks of the house of Clovis in no way answered either to ancient Gaul or to the modern French Empire. The Merowingian realm consisted of central Germany and Northern Gaul. Southern Gaul was overrun rather than really conquered, and northern Italy was overrun also. For a short time, during the wars of the sixth century, Frankish conquerors appeared south of the Alps on an errand which, for aught we know, may afford a full precedent for the Italian campaigns of Francis the First, or for those of either Buonaparte. But the real Frankish territory of this period does not reach southward of the Loire. North of that river we find the Frank of Neustria, perhaps by this time in some degree Romanized, and to the east of him comes the true German Frank of Austrasia. How far the Franks of Gaul had yielded to Roman influences during the Merowingian period it is impossible to say; but everything leads us to believe that before the time of Pippin they must have begun to differ widely from their uncorrupted

Austrasian brethren. We shall see presently that, by the middle of the ninth century, a Roman speech, no longer Latin, but as yet hardly to be called French, had grown up in Frankish Gaul. Now the influences of the previous century and a half were altogether in a Teutonic direction: a Romance dialect could hardly have lived on through the domination of the Austrasian Mayors and Kings, unless it had been pretty firmly established before the end of the Merowingian rule.

The Carolingian dynasty dates its formal beginning from the election of Pippin as King of the Franks in 752. But practically it may be carried back to the beginning of the series of Austrasian Mayors in 681. The first Pippin and the first Charles were really sovereigns of the Franks, no less than the Pippin and the Charles who were invested with the royal title. And this transfer of power to the house of Pippin was nearly equivalent to a second Teutonic conquest. Whatever the Merwings and their Gaulish subjects may have been, there is no doubt as to the true Teutonic character of the whole dynasty of the Karlings. They were raised to power by the swords of the Teutonic Austrasians; the cradle of their race was the Teutonic Heerstall; their favourite seats of royalty were the Teutonic Engelheim and Aachen; as Mayors of the Palace, as Kings of the Franks, as Roman Cæsars, nay even when they had shrunk up into the petty kings of the rock of Laon, they clave firmly, down to their latest days, to the dress, the manners, and the tongue of their Teutonic fathers. Under the "kings of the second race," Aquitaine and even Neustria were little more than subject provinces of a German monarch.

The zenith of the Frankish power was attained in the reign of Charles the Great. Charles, King of the Franks, King of the Lombards, Patrician of the Romans, was something far more than a king either of Gaul or of Germany; he was the lord of Western Christendom. All Gaul, all that was then Germany, were his; Aquitaine,

Saxony, Bavaria, Lombardy, were gathered in as conquered provinces; the Slave, the Avar, the Northman, became subjects or tributaries; the Commander of the Faithful himself corresponded on equal and friendly terms with the mightiest of the followers of the Cross. At last a dignity fell to the lot of the triumphant Frank to which no barbarian of the West had as yet ventured to aspire. Goths and Herulans had long before made and unmade the Western Cæsars; Gothic chiefs had reigned in Italy with the royal title; but the diadem and the sceptre of Augustus had as yet been worn by no Teutonic brow and grasped by no Teutonic hand. The Old Rome had stooped to become a provincial dependency of the New; but it had never submitted to the permanent sway of a barbarian. Theodoric had reigned, a Gothic king indeed in fact, but an Imperial lieutenant in theory; Alboin and Liudprand had appeared as open enemies, but they had never passed the gates of the Eternal City; Charles himself, his father, and his grandfather, had exercised the full Imperial power under humbler names; but the Patrician was only the republican magistrate of the Roman commonwealth or the vicegerent of the Eastern Cæsar. By that Cæsar's regnal years charters still were dated, and his image and superscription were still impressed on a coinage from which no tax or tribute ever reached him. At last the moment came when the Old Rome was again to assert her coequality with her younger sister, and to affirm that she had never forfeited her right to nominate one at least of the masters of the world. Rome once more chose her own Cæsar, but that Cæsar was not of Roman or Italian blood; the golden crown at last rested on the open brow of the lordly German, and the Pontiff and People of Rome proclaimed the Imperial style of "Charles Augustus, crowned by God, the great and pacific Emperor of the Romans." Not that the Roman Augustus gained thereby an inch or particle of territory or power which had not already belonged to the simple Frankish king.

But in the eyes of a large portion of his subjects his rule was thereby at once changed from a dominion of force into a dominion of law; the elected and consecrated Emperor became, in the eyes of all southern Europe, a different being from the mere barbarian conqueror; we might almost say that the world recognized the Teuton as its chosen and natural ruler, when for the first time a man of Teutonic blood was raised to the highest pinnacle of earthly greatness. It shows the true greatness of Charles's mind that his head was not in the least turned by a splendour which might have dazzled the imagination of any mortal. Crowned in the Eternal City by the common father of Christendom, he still remained, Imperator and Augustus as he was, the same simple hearty German as of old. Even Alexander, on the throne of the Great King, could not wholly endure the trial; he went far to exchange the spirit of the chosen King of Macedon and chief of Greece for the arbitrary rule of a Persian despot. But Charles was in no way spoiled or changed by the almost superhuman glory from which he seems himself to have shrunk. He still retained his German dress, his German speech, his German habits; nor did he ever transfer the pomp, the slavery, the almost idolatrous incense of the court of his Byzantine colleague into the free Teutonic air of Aachen and of Engelheim.

Those were indeed days of glory for the ancient Frank; but it is a glory in which the modern Frenchman can claim no share. Celtic, Parisian, France had as yet no being. Its language was as yet the unformed *patois* of a conquered province. Paris was a provincial town which the lord of Rome and Aachen once visited in the course of a long progress amongst a string of its lowly fellows. Gaul, at least its Celtic portions, was seldom honoured by the presence of its German master, and it added but little to the strength of his German armies. The native speech of Charles was the old Teutonic; Latin, the literary

tongue of the whole West, and still the native speech of many provinces, he spoke fluently as an acquired language; Greek, the other universal and Imperial tongue, he understood when spoken, but could not himself speak it with ease. French he could neither speak nor understand; for, alas, as yet no French language could be said to exist; a King of the Franks was about as likely to express himself in the dialect of a Neustrian Celt as an Emperor of the French is now to indite his pamphlets in Basque, Walloon, or Bas-Breton. The valley of the Loire, the chosen home of the Valois, the valley of the Seine, the chosen home of the Bourbon, had little charms for the Austrasian Frank, whose heart, amid Roman pomps and Aquitanian and Hunnish victories, ever yearned for the banks of his own Teutonic Rhine. Under Charles that elder *Francia* which was the native land of the Frank was at the summit of its greatness; but there was no period, before or after, at which that younger *Francia* of which Paris is the centre was so utterly insignificant in the eyes of men.

Another of the many mistakes with which this period of history is overshadowed is the common belief that the long reign of Charles, his wars, his treaties, his legislation, left hardly any lasting fruit behind them. We are too apt to suppose that his great work was almost immediately undone amidst the dissensions of his grandsons. This again arises from looking at him and his Empire from a French instead of a German point of view. Looked at from Aquitaine or Neustria, the work of Charles the Great was altogether ephemeral; but it bears quite another hue if we once step on the other side of the Rhine. Charles found a large part of Germany a mere wilderness of heathendom; the Christian Frank found the bitterest and most stubborn enemy of his creed and empire in the kindred Saxon. Charles converted Saxony by the sword; but, however the work was done, it was done effectually. He welded Saxony and the Teutonic *Francia* together into

that great German kingdom which so long held the first rank in Europe, and which, strange as it seems to us, was really, when we compare it with Gaul, Italy, or Spain, the most united of Western realms. He opened a path in which a long line of illustrious German kings and Emperors, from Arnulf to Frederick the Second, worked with no small success after him. That he bequeathed to them a claim to his Imperial style, and a vague pretension to his Imperial power, was an inheritance of but doubtful advantage. The Kingdom of Germany was in truth crushed and broken to pieces beneath the weight of the Holy Roman Empire; but of the united and glorious Germany of Henry the Fowler and Otto the Great, of Henry the Frank and of Frederick the Swabian, Charles the Great was the father and the founder. If Gaul and Italy fell away, the *Regnum Teutonicum* survived for four hundred years, and it still survives in the hearts of a people longing to be one as they were beneath his sceptre.* Only remember what the *Francia* and the *Franci* of Charles really were, and the dismemberment of the Carolingian Empire amounts to little more than the lopping-off of some outlying foreign provinces from the body of the great Teutonic realm.

We have now reached the ninth century. Charles was crowned at Rome in the last year of the eighth century, and fourteen years later he was borne to his Imperial tomb at Aachen. He had founded the German kingdom and won the Roman diadem for its kings. But before the new century had passed, another nation, another language, was beginning to appear. During the century which followed the death of Charles, we get our first glimpses of the existence of modern, Celtic, Parisian, France. Before the close of the second century from his

* [The *Regnum Teutonicum* has now come to life again, but its chief bears the Imperial title. Still the inaccuracy may be forgiven. Now that dukes and electors have grown into kings, it is hard to see what a *Basileus*, a King of Kings, could be called except Emperor.] [1871.]

coronation, modern, Celtic, Parisian, France, the kingdom of Odo and Hugh Capet, is fully established, high in rank, but as yet small in power, among the recognized divisions of Western Christendom.

The Western or Frankish Empire, as it stood under Charles the Great, was undoubtedly far too vast, and included nations far too incongruous, to remain permanently united under a single head. Charles himself, it is evident, perceived this. The division of a kingdom among the sons of a deceased king was indeed nothing new; it was a device which had been constantly tried in Merowingian Gaul. But we cannot believe that Charles would have given the sanction of his master genius to such a plan, had it not been really adapted to the circumstances of the time. His schemes were very elaborate. The mode of succession chalked out by him included a mixture of popular election and hereditary right, and all the minor kings were to be united in a sort of federal bond by the recognition of a common superior in the Emperor. Whether such a system could have worked may be doubted. It had worked under himself; he had made his sons kings in Italy and Aquitaine without any prejudice to his own rights as supreme Emperor. But submission to a father, and that father Charles the Great, was quite another thing from submission to a brother, an uncle, or, as it might soon be, a distant cousin. Charles's own scheme of division came to nothing, because of the death of two out of his three sons. Lewis the Pious succeeded him in the possession of the whole Empire, with only one subordinate king in the person of the unfortunate Bernhard of Italy. But it is well worth while to mark the geographical limits of the several kingdoms as traced out by the hand of Charles himself. Most likely he had no thought of forming national kingdoms at all.* There was still to be one kingdom of the Franks, though it was divided

* This seems to be shown by the titles which Eginhard gives to the subordinate kings. Lewis, for instance, is not "rex Aquitaniæ," or "rex Aquitanorum," but merely "rex super Aquitaniam.'

among several kings; just as in the early days of the division of the Roman Empire, the Empire was still held to be one, though its administration was portioned out between two or more Imperial colleagues. Certainly the three kingdoms traced out for Charles, Pippin, and Lewis coincide with no national divisions either of earlier or of later times. Roughly speaking, Charles seems to have meant to keep the old Frankish kingdom for his eldest son Charles, and to divide his conquests between Pippin and Lewis. But, besides that the frontier is not very accurately followed, one most important exception is to be made. The wholly new acquisitions of Italy and the Spanish March, together with Aquitaine and Bavaria, which had been reduced from nominal vassalage to real obedience, were divided between the two younger sons. Charles took the old *Francia*; but he also, by the necessity of the case, took the great conquest of Saxony. Of the three divisions, Aquitaine, the kingdom of Lewis, came nearest to being a national kingdom. Southern Gaul and the Spanish March answer pretty nearly to what were afterwards the countries of the *Lingua d'Oc*. But the Italian kingdom, cut short at one end by the Byzantine province, was lengthened at the other by the addition of all Germany south of the Danube. Did the theory of "natural boundaries" flash across the mind of the great Charles when he made that great river a political limit? Certainly no such idea presented itself to him with regard to the Rhine. Not the slightest regard was paid either to the past boundaries of Roman Gaul or to the future boundaries of modern France. Aquitaine was to have something like a national sovereign; but no such boon was conferred on Neustria. The German king was to reign, as of old, on both sides of the German river. The kingdom of the younger Charles was to consist of what is now Northern France and Northern Germany; while what is now Southern France formed the great bulk of the kingdom of Lewis. Modern, Parisian, France was so far from answering to the *Francia* of Charles the Great, that it did

not even occur to him as a convenient division when he was portioning out the vast monarchy of which it formed a part.

The division made by Charles had, as we said, no lasting effect. It is valuable only as showing what were the ideas of a convenient partition entertained in the year 806 by the greatest of living men. Charles was succeeded by Lewis. His reign was a mere series of ever-fluctuating partitions of the Empire among his sons. Sir Francis Palgrave, in the first volume of his History of England and Normandy, has taken the trouble to reckon up no less than ten successive schemes of division. In the last of these we begin to discern, for the first time, something like the modern kingdom of France. Then, in 839, Northern and Southern Gaul, Neustria and Aquitaine, were for the first time united as the kingdom of Charles the Bald. The kingdom thus formed was far smaller than modern France, but it lay almost wholly within it. It took in Flanders at the one end and the Spanish March at the other; but both of these provinces remained French, in a vague sense, far down into the middle ages. The suzerainty over the county of Barcelona was only given up by Saint Lewis, and that over the county of Flanders lingered on to be one of the main subjects of dispute between Francis the First and Charles the Fifth. The kingdom of Charles the Bald was undoubtedly the first germ of modern France. It was, if we except the Flemings, the Bretons, and the Basques at its several corners, a kingdom wholly of the Roman speech. This fact comes prominently forth in the famous oath of Strassburg, preserved by Nithard.* That precious document has been commented upon over and over again as a matter of philology; it is no less valuable as a matter of history. It shows that in 841 the distinctions of race and language were beginning to make themselves felt. The Austrasian soldiers of King Lewis swear in the Old-German tongue, of which the oath is an early monument; but of the language in

* Nithard, iii. 6, ap. Pertz, ii. 666.

which the oath is taken by the Neustrian soldiers of King Charles * the oath itself is, as far as our knowledge goes, absolutely the oldest monument. In the *lingua Romana*, as Nithard calls it, we see for the first time a tongue essentially of Roman origin, and yet a tongue which has departed too far from the Roman model to be any longer called Latin. It has ceased to be Latin, but we cannot yet call it French, even Old-French. How far it is the mother of French, and how far rather the mother of Provençal, we must leave those to decide whose special business lies with the history of language. For our purpose it is enough that it reveals to us the existence of a Gaul speaking neither Celtic, nor Teutonic, nor Latin, but Romance; that is, it shows that one most important step had been taken towards the creation of modern France. As yet the new speech was known only as *lingua Romana*; in the course of the next century it became nationalized as *lingua Gallica*.† One might be curious to know how far men had begun really to feel that a new language had been formed; but we can say nothing, except what we may infer from the fact that Count Nithard, a man of high rank and high ability, and, by an illegitimate female descent, the actual grandson of the great Charles, was struck by the phenomenon of the diversity of speech, and thought the formula worth preserving in the very words of the vulgar tongue. This is in itself remarkable enough, and at all events it proves the observant and inquiring spirit of Nithard himself. We wish that he had had more followers. There is nothing which we more commonly lack in the Latin chroniclers of the middle ages than notices of the tongue of the people, and even of the tongue of the actors in the story.

* [It is worth notice that Charles the Bald, as well as his soldiers, could speak the "lingua Romana" or Romance tongue. See the Capitularies put forth by the kings Lewis, Charles, and Lothar at Coblenz in 860. Lewis speaks "lingua Theothisca," and Charles "lingua Romana" (Pertz, Leges, i. 472). Yet Charles, in his own Capitularies, speaks of "lingua Theodiscae" as the language of the country, exactly as Lewis does (i. 482, 497).] [1871.]

† See Richer, i. 20, iii. 85, iv. 100, ap. Pertz, vol. v.

The wars between the sons of the Emperor Lewis, and the final settlement at Verdun in 843, did but confirm the existence of the new kingdom. The connexion between the two parts of ancient *Francia* was now severed for ever; Neustria and Austrasia were never, except during the ephemeral Empire of Charles the Fat, again united under a single ruler. On the other hand, a connexion was formed between Neustria and Aquitaine, a connexion which was of little moment, but which was destined to bear at the time no small fruit in future ages. By the treaty of Verdun the Empire was divided into three parts. Charles took, as we have seen, the purely Romance lands of Neustria and Aquitaine; Lewis took the purely German lands far to the east. Lothar, their eldest brother, the Roman Cæsar, of course took Frankish Italy; but he took also that long strip of debateable land from the Mediterranean to the Ocean, which took his name, and part of which still keeps it. *Lotharingia, Lothringen, Lorraine*, lay between the Germanic realm of Lewis and the Romance realm of Charles, taking in doubtless then, as now, lands both of Romance and of Germanic speech. But it was a kingdom which had no principle of unity of any kind; no kind of tie of language, of history, or of "natural boundaries," united Provence and Holland and the intermediate countries. The kingdom, therefore, had no lasting being. Sometimes we find it cut up into several separate kingdoms; sometimes, as in our own day, it was divided between the two more compact realms on each side of it. Those two realms remained, grew, and flourished, while Lotharingia fell to pieces. Those realms need names from the beginning, and it is hard to avoid giving them, though it is still too soon to do so, the familiar names of Germany and France.

Thus we get our first glimpse of France in the modern sense, a creation of the ninth century, not of the fifth. As Sir Francis Palgrave says,* "this division created territorial France." Modern France was thus created, but it

* History of England and Normandy, i. 345.

was created purely by accident. Charles was king over Neustria; and the Emperor Lewis, wishing to enlarge the appanage of his favourite son, added the kingdom of Aquitaine, which fell vacant by the death of his brother Pippin. Neustria and Aquitaine together made France, such a France as lasted till the fourteenth century; a France without Alpine slopes or frontiers of the Rhine; a France which, instead of the Rhine, barely reached to the Rhone, and which still had to "reunite," not only Savoy and Nizza, but Provence, Dauphiny, the county of Burgundy, Lyons, Bresse, Bugey, Elsass, and Lothringen. And even within the limits of the new kingdom, the position of Aquitaine shows how utterly accidental and artificial the creation was. Aquitaine, the kingdom of Pippin, had no love for the sway of Charles of Neustria; it was constantly revolting on behalf of Pippin's heirs, as the representatives of its national independence. Aquitaine was joined to Neustria by the command of Lewis the Pious; but no effectual union took place for ages; all that the command of the pious Emperor brought about was to invest the Neustrian king with vague and nearly nominal rights, which did not fully become realities for six hundred years. Aquitaine was to the Kings of the French pretty much what Romagna was to the Popes. Constantine or Pippin or Charles or Matilda or Rudolf gave Romagna to the Holy See; but the sovereignty of the Holy See was of the most unpractical kind till its rights were at last enforced by the sword of Cæsar Borgia. So it was with Aquitaine: nominally part of the kingdom of Charles the Bald, it soon split into two great principalities, differing in nothing but name from sovereign kingdoms. The Duke of Aquitaine and the Count of Toulouse came to rank among the princes of Europe. They might be vassals of the King of France, but their vassalage went no further than placing the royal name in the dates of their charters. During the busy French and Norman history of the tenth century, the French chroniclers tell us much about Germany and some-

thing about England, but about Southern Gaul we only hear just enough to assure us that it had not vanished from the face of creation. The Loire seems in those days to have been the truest natural boundary; between Northern and Southern Gaul we find few relations either of peace or war, but something very like utter mutual oblivion. As time rolled on, the Aquitanian duchy was, in the twelfth century, united to the crown of England; while the eastern portion of Old Aquitaine, Languedoc, or the county of Toulouse, became, in the next age, one of the first and greatest acquisitions of the kings of Paris. Few portions of history are less understood than that of the noble duchy which so long formed one of the fairest possessions of our own kings. Few Englishmen understand the difference between the English tenure of Bordeaux and the English tenure of Calais. When the Black Prince kept his court at Bordeaux as Prince of Aquitaine, most readers look upon him as an English conqueror, just like Henry the Fifth at Paris. Bordeaux is marked in the modern map as part of France; therefore people do not understand that, till its loss in the fifteenth century, the kings of France had never held it at all, except during the momentary and fraudulent occupation of Aquitaine by Philip the Fair. When Talbot fell before Chastillon, he fell in the cause, not of the bondage, but of the independence of the Pyrenæan duchy, in the same cause which Hunholt and Lupus fought against Charles the Great, and Pippin and Sancho against Charles the Bald. In short, Lewis the Pious might grant Aquitaine in the ninth century to Charles the Bald, but it was only Charles the Seventh, in the fifteenth century, who first really obtained possession of the gift.

The Frankish Empire, as we have seen, was divided by the treaty of Verdun into three kingdoms: the Eastern and Western, which grew severally into modern Germany and France, and the central realm of Italy and Lotharingia, which soon fell asunder. The next forty years form little but a history of unions and partitions. Each father tried

to divide his dominions amongst his sons; each brother or uncle did his best to seize to himself the inheritance of his brothers and nephews. Of all the princes of that age, the Emperor Lewis the Second, reigning in Italy as a real Roman Cæsar, and fighting in the cause of Christendom against the Saracen, is the only one who can claim any portion of our esteem. Even he was not altogether free from the general vice; but he has at least merits to set against it which we do not find in the case of his fellows. The whole period is one of utter confusion and division. At last, in 885, nearly the whole of the Carolingian Empire was reunited in the person of Charles the Fat. He had gradually gathered on his brow the Imperial crown of Rome and the royal crowns of Germany, Italy, and the Western Kingdom. Still to this reunion one important exception must be made. One state, part of the Lotharingia of forty years earlier, had set the example of entire revolt from the blood of the great Charles. In 879 Count Boso was elected and crowned king over a kingdom which, as Sir Francis Palgrave says, has almost vanished from history, but whose memory it is just now highly desirable to recall. Boso made the beginnings of the short-lived kingdom of Burgundy or Arles, a kingdom lying between France and Italy, and which may be roughly described as the country between the Rhone and the Alps. In modern geographical language, it includes Provence, Orange, the Venaissin, Dauphiny, Lyons, Bresse, Bugey, the County of Burgundy (or *Franche Comté*), with Savoy, Nizza, and a large part of Switzerland. On the theory of natural boundaries, the Kingdom of Burgundy seems quite as well marked out as the Kingdom of France. The Rhone and the Saone to the west, the Alps to the east, the Mediterranean to the south, make as good lines of demarcation as one commonly meets with in the political map. Nearly all its inhabitants were of the Romance speech—all except a small German territory in what long afterwards became Switzerland. As far as we can see, Burgundy had much more right to ask

to extend herself to the Ocean by swallowing up the kindred province of Aquitaine than Parisian France had to ask to extend itself to the Alps by swallowing up the far more foreign Kingdom of Burgundy.

In 887 Charles the Fat was deposed by common consent of his various realms, which were from henceforth separated with a far more thorough and lasting separation than before. The Carolingian Empire vanishes; even the rank of Emperor sinks into a kind of abeyance. Emperors indeed were crowned during the first half of the ninth century; but there was no dynasty which permanently united Imperial power to Imperial pretensions till, in 962, Otto the Great finally annexed the Roman Empire and the Italian kingdom to his own Teutonic crown. The division of 888 was really the beginning of the modern states and the modern divisions of Europe. The Carolingian Empire was broken up into four separate kingdoms: the Western Kingdom, answering roughly to France, the Eastern Kingdom or Germany, and those of Italy and Burgundy. Of these, the three first remain as the greatest nations of the continent: Burgundy, by that name, has vanished; but its place as an European power is filled, far more worthily than by any king or Cæsar, by the noble Confederation of Switzerland.

Of the four kingdoms thus formed, three at once cast away their allegiance to the Carolingian blood. Germany elected Arnulf, a bastard of the Imperial house; but, after the death of his son Lewis, the Teutonic sceptre passed altogether away from the male line of Pippin and Charles. Boso of Burgundy was connected with that race only by marriage. Italy chose shifting kings and Emperors of her own. The Western Kingdom chose the patriarch of that long line which was, with two periods of intermission, to rule her down to our own day, which still reigns over Castile and Aragon,* and which we have seen happily

* [In 1860 I did not foresee an Italian—in 860 he would have been a Burgundian—King of Spain.] [1871.]

expelled from the minor thrones of Parma and of both the Sicilies.

The division of 843 first introduced us to a Romance—that is, really a Celtic—*Francia*, as distinguished from the elder Teutonic *Francia* of the old Frankish kings. The division of 888 first introduces us to a Capetian and a Parisian *Francia*. Since the death of the great Charles, the city on the Seine, the old home of Julian, had been gradually rising in consequence. It plays an important part during the reign of his son Lewis the Pious. Characteristically enough, Paris first appears in our history as the scene of a conspiracy against her Teutonic master. There it was that, in 830, the rebels gathered who seized and imprisoned, and at last deposed, the pious Emperor. Later in the ninth century Paris won a more honourable renown; she became the bulwark of Gaul against the inroads of the Northmen. The pirates soon found out the importance of the position of the city in any attack or defence of Gaul from her northern side. Through her great deeds and sufferings in this warfare, Paris grew into a centre, a capital, first a ducal and then a royal city. The great siege of Paris in 885 and 886, and its gallant defence by Count Eudes or Odo, fixed the destiny of the city as the future capital of the land. On the deposition of Charles the Fat, Count Odo was, after some ineffectual attempts on behalf of other candidates, elected and consecrated to what we are now strongly tempted to speak of as the Kingdom of *France*.

Yet the notion of a great Frankish realm, held in a sort of co-parcenary, long survived the day when the descendants of Charles ceased to be its masters. Germany, the old Frankish land, long clave to the Frankish name. One of her greatest Imperial dynasties was of Frankish blood. Nor did their Saxon predecessors and their Swabian successors reject the title. As late as the reign of Frederick Barbarossa, the name of Frank was still used, and used too with an air of triumph, as equivalent to the name of

German.* The kings and kingdoms of this age had indeed no fixed titles, because all were still looked on as mere portions of the great Frankish realm. Another step has now been taken towards the creation of modern France; but the older state of things has not yet wholly passed away. Germany has no definite name; for a long time it is *Francia Orientalis*, *Francia Teutonica;* then it becomes *Regnum Teutonicum*, *Regnum Teutonicorum*.† But it is equally clear that, within the limits of that Western or Latin France, *Francia* and *Francus* were fast getting their modern meanings of *France* and *Frenchman*, as distinguished from Frank or German;‡ they were, in fact, names of honour to which each of the divided nations clave as specially its own. Even so early as the reign of Lewis the Pious, one writer distinguished *Franci* and *Germani*,§ meaning by the former the people of the Western Kingdom. Gradually the name was, in the usage of Gaul and of Europe, thoroughly fixed in this sense. The Merwings, the Karlings, the Capets, all alike called themselves *Reges Francorum; Francus* having of course totally changed its meaning in the meanwhile. In the Eastern Kingdom, on the other hand, the German sovereign, when he had grown into a Roman Emperor, gradually dropped his style as Frankish king. It is this continuity of name and title which gives to modern, "Western," "Latin," France a false appearance of being

* Otto of Freisingen, passim. See especially the speech of Frederick, ii. 22 (Muratori, vi. 722).

† In the bull of deposition of Henry IV., Hildebrand uses the curious form "totius regni Theutonicorum et Italiæ gubernacula contradico" (Bruno de Bel. Sax. cap. 70, ap. Pertz, vii. 354). Italy had a local name; Germany had none. So Henry just before talks of "regnum Italiæ," but we do not remember "regnum Germaniæ" or "Alemaniæ" in that age.

‡ [The use of the word *Francia* in writers of the ninth century is very vague. Sometimes it seems to be used of the whole *Regnum Occidentale*. This is an intermediate sense between its widest and its narrowest meaning, and a sense roughly answering to that to which it has come back in modern times. But within the Western kingdom it soon became fixed to the Parisian duchy with its dukes and kings, and in the East to *Francia Orientalis* or *Teutonica*.] [1871.]

§ Vita Hludowici Imp. cap. 45, ap. Pertz, ii. 633.

a continuation or representative of the old Frankish kingdom. But no one who really understands the history of the time can doubt for a moment that, among the four kingdoms which arose out of the ruins of the Carolingian Empire, it was "Eastern *Francia*," the "Teutonic Kingdom," which might most truly claim, in extent of territory, in retention of language, in possession of the old seats of royalty, to be the true representative of the *Francia* of Charles the Great.

Odo of Paris then, in 888, became *Rex Francorum* in a sense which, modern as the words sound, cannot be so well translated as by the familiar title of "King of the French." We have at last France before us, with Paris for her capital and the lord of Paris for her king. But neither the Carolingian race nor the Carolingian interest was as yet extinct in the Western *Francia*. The next century is a history of a continued struggle in various forms between the German and what we may now call the French blood, between the Carolingian and the Capetian house, between Paris and Laon, between the Duke of the French, the lord of Paris, and the lord of Laon, still the West-Frankish king. Odo was elected as the hero of the siege of Paris, the true champion of Gaul and of Christendom. But he soon found a rival in the incapable Charles the Simple, whose only claim was the doubtful belief that the blood of his great namesake flowed in his veins. Charles was again overthrown by Duke Robert, the brother of King Odo, who himself afterwards reigned as the second of the Parisian kings. Charles in his turn overthrew Robert, who died in battle at Soissons in 923. The heir of the Capetian house was Hugh, surnamed the Great. His career was a strange one: he refused the offered crown, and preferred the character of a king-maker to that of a king. One can hardly help thinking that he had some superstitious dread of a title which had brought little but sorrow to his father and uncle; for he certainly bore himself as a king in every-

thing but name. He bore what to us sounds the strange title of *Dux Francorum*; and, as Duke of the French, he was a far more powerful potentate than the King of the French who was his nominal sovereign. On the death of Robert, he declined the royal dignity for himself, and passed it on to his brother-in-law, Rudolf or Raoul, Duke of French Burgundy. He next, like our own king-maker of a later day, passed it on to Lewis the son of Charles. The Carolingian king once more reigned on the rock of Laon, but he found anything but a peaceful subject in the mighty Duke of Paris. The Duke of the French allowed himself full power of revolt, of disobeying, attacking, expelling, imprisoning the King of the French,—anything, in short, but avowedly reigning in his stead. King Lewis was succeeded by his son Lothar, and Duke Hugh the Great by his son Hugh Capet. The younger Hugh however, though in no imprudent hurry to obtain a crown, had not his father's rooted objection to receive one. He remained Duke of the French during the long reign of Lothar and the short reign of his son Lewis; at last, in 987, on the death of Lewis, Hugh brought about his own election. The struggle went on for a while in the person of Charles of Lotharingia, the Carolingian pretender; but Hugh kept his crown and handed it on to his descendants. He founded, in short, the most enduring of all dynasties. No other royal patriarch has been succeeded by more than eight centuries of direct male descendants, by three centuries and a half of unbroken succession from father to son. Since 987 no King of France of any other line has felt the touch of the consecrating oil of Rheims. Hugh's own city has indeed beheld the coronation of one English king and of one Corsican tyrant. Both alike yielded to the claims of the returning Capetian. Who can tell whether a race endowed with such an unparalleled gift of permanency may not again return to the city which their forefathers first raised to greatness?

The immediate results of Hugh's elevation were not very

marked. The Duke of the French became the King of the French, and the same prince reigned at Paris and at Laon. But in the greater part of Gaul the change from the Carolingian to the Capetian line was hardly felt. To Hugh's own subjects it made little practical difference whether their prince were called Duke or King. Beyond the Loire men were utterly heedless who might reign either at Paris or at Laon. But slight as may have been the immediate change, the event of 987 was a real revolution: it was the completion of a change which had been preparing for a century and a half, and it was the true beginning of a new period. The modern kingdom of France dates its definite existence from the election of Hugh; the partitions of 843 and 888 showed in what way the stream of events was running, but the change of 987 was the full establishment of the thing itself. There was now at last, what till quite lately there has been ever since, a French king reigning at Paris. When we remember all that Paris has been since, how completely it has become, not merely the centre of France, but France itself, it is clear that the mere change of the royal city was alone an event of the highest importance. The rock of Laon could never have won the same position as the island-city of the Seine. It might have remained a royal fortress; it could never have become a national capital. The Karlings remained German to the last; the kings of Laon were Franks in the old sense, the kings of Paris were Frenchmen in the new. The native tongue of King Lewis was Teutonic; the native tongue of king Hugh was Romance. France now breaks off all traces of her old connexion with Germany. Hitherto the "King beyond the Rhine" has been, in friendship or in enmity, an important personage in the politics of Latin *Francia*; even in the middle of the tenth century we find Otto of Saxony and Lewis of Laon still acting like royal colleagues in the administration of one Frankish realm. From the election of Hugh the German Cæsar becomes an utter stranger to the Capetian

realm. Lotharingia too becomes definitely German. As long as kings of the Carolingian house still reigned in Western *Francia*, Lotharingia was a border-land of France and Germany, the seat of loyalty to the Carolingian house, but preferring a German to a mere Frenchman. But after the Capetian revolution it becomes an undoubted fief of the Teutonic kingdom. Its Carolingian loyalty remained untouched; it still might boast of having a descendant of Charles and Pippin for its immediate ruler; but that ruler was no longer a King of the Western *Francia* or a pretender to its crown, but a Duke holding his states in fee of the Saxon Emperor.

Thus the change of dynasty in 987 marks the final establishment of France in the modern sense. The geographical name was still, for the most part, confined to the Parisian Duchy, but the *Regnum Francorum*, in its modern sense, had now come into being. Its boundaries, as they stood under the early Parisian kings, differed hardly at all from the West-Frankish boundaries as settled in 843. But we should bear carefully in mind how utterly nominal the royal authority was over the greater part of the territory comprised within those limits. It should be thoroughly understood, first, that the kingdom as it then stood was very much smaller than modern France; secondly, that, even within the kingdom, the King was merely the head of a body of sovereign princes, some of whom were at least as powerful as himself. The subsequent history of France is the history of two processes: first, the conversion of a nominal feudal superiority into a direct sovereignty over the whole kingdom; secondly, the annexation of divers states which formed no part of the kingdom at all. The two processes are not accurately distinguished in popular imagination, and the Parisian phrase of "réunion" greatly tends to confound them. To talk of the "réunion" of Normandy or French Burgundy is not absolute nonsense, because Normandy and French Burgundy were, at all events by a fiction of feudal law, grants proceeding

from the crown of France, which were afterwards re-incorporated with the royal domain from which they had been severed. But a "réunion" of Provence, Lorraine, or Savoy, is absolute nonsense, because those provinces never formed any part of the Capetian monarchy. These two processes, of internal consolidation and of external aggression, have now been going on side by side for six hundred years. It will best suit our purpose to give a brief sketch of the results of each separately.

The Kingdom of France, as it stood in 987, contained six great principalities besides the royal domain, namely, those afterwards called the six Lay Peerages—Flanders, Normandy, Aquitaine, Toulouse, Burgundy, and Champagne. The titles of Toulouse and Champagne may be a little later, but the states themselves already existed. Besides these, there were a crowd of smaller potentates, holding either of the crown or of these great vassals. With the exception of the Spanish March and of part of Flanders, all these states have long been fully incorporated with the French monarchy. But we must remember that, under the earlier French kings, the connexion of most of these provinces with their nominal suzerain was even looser than the connexion of the German princes after the peace of Westfalia with the Viennese Emperors. A great French duke was as independent within his own dominions as an Elector of Saxony or Bavaria, and there were no common institutions, no Diet or assembly of any kind, to bring him into fellowship either with his liege lord or with his fellow-vassals. Aquitaine and Toulouse, as we have already said, seem almost to have forgotten that there was any King of the French at all, or at all events that they had anything to do with him. They did not often even pay him the compliment of waging war upon him, a mode of recognition of his existence which was constantly indulged in by their brethren of Normandy and Flanders. Normandy was the possession of Scandinavian invaders, whom a residence in Gaul was fast transforming into

Frenchmen of a grander type. Charles the Simple granted the province to Hrolf Ganger, the Rou or Rollo of French and Latin writers, and along with it he granted a feudal superiority over the turbulent Celts of Britanny. The Norman dukes speedily changed into French princes, and played a most important part in French history. At last one of their number won the crown of England, and nearly a century later a count of Anjou inherited England and Normandy from his mother, and received Aquitaine and Poitou as the dowry of his wife. A perfectly novel power was thus formed in France. We must not transfer to the twelfth century the ideas of two or three centuries later, and look upon Henry the Second as an English king reigning in France. Henry was a French feudatory, who had contrived to unite in his own hands an accumulation of French fiefs, which rendered him, even on French ground, far stronger than his nominal suzerain. The possession of England gave him a higher title than that of Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine; its valiant inhabitants of both races added to his military strength. But England was not his home; it was not the Englishman who reigned over Anjou, but the Angevin who reigned over England. Henry and Richard held greater territories in France than those of the King and the other feudatories put together. They held the mouths of all the great rivers, and possessed the great cities of Rouen, Tours, Poitiers, and Bordeaux. The King meanwhile, the lord of Paris and Orleans, was cooped up in the centre of his nominal dominions. Thus matters stood at the beginning of the thirteenth century; but they were not a little altered before its close. When Philip Augustus came to the throne, the King of the French did not own a single seaport; but Philip the Fair could boast of a seaboard on the English Channel, the Ocean, and the Mediterranean. The crimes of John lost him all the northern part of his French possessions. Normandy, Maine, Anjou, and Touraine were incorporated with the royal domain. Britanny, the *arrière-fief* of Normandy,

became an immediate fief of the crown till the time when it was united with France through the marriage of Lewis the Twelfth and Anne of Britanny. The loss of Normandy and the other lands wrested by Philip from John had the twofold effect of making both the King of the French and the King of the English what their formal titles imported. When the crown of France had entered by forfeiture on Normandy, Anjou, and Touraine, it had become far stronger than any single feudatory. Again, the English kings of the Angevin house, now cut off from their old home, began to be really English rulers. Hitherto England had been a dependency of Normandy or Anjou; now Aquitaine became a dependency of England. The wars of Henry the Second and Richard the First were French wars, the struggles of a French feudatory striving to get the better of his suzerain. The wars of Edward the Third, and still more the wars of Henry the Fifth, were English wars. They began indeed in French dynastic claims, but it soon appeared that their real object was the subjection of France to England. As such, they do not immediately concern our subject. The aspect in which they do bear upon it is this. By the Peace of Bretigny Edward the Third gave up his claims on the crown of France; but he was acknowledged in return as independent Prince of Aquitaine, without any homage or superiority being reserved to the French monarch. When Aquitaine therefore was conquered by France, partly in the fourteenth, fully in the fifteenth century, it was not the "réunion" of a forfeited fief, but the absorption of a distinct and sovereign state. The feelings of Aquitaine itself seem to have been divided. The nobles to a great extent, though far from universally, preferred the French connexion. It better fell in with their notions of chivalry, feudal dependency, and the like; the privileges too which French law conferred on noble birth would make their real interests lie that way. But the great cities and, we have reason to believe, the mass of the people also, clave faithfully to their ancient dukes; and they had

good reason to do so. The English kings, both by habit and by interest, naturally protected the municipal liberties of Bordeaux and Bayonne, and they exposed no part of their subjects to the horrors of French taxation and general oppression. When, in 1451, the first conquest was achieved, and the Bordelese for the first time felt what the hand of a French master really was, they speedily revolted in favour of the more distant and more indulgent lord. The French conquest of Aquitaine was very much like what a French conquest of the Channel Islands would be now. The theory of natural boundaries claims them equally, and the theory of identity of language claims them with better right. But in the teeth of all theories, the people of Bordeaux knew then, and the people of Jersey know now, that practical liberty and good government does not lie on the side of the power to which abstract theories would assign them.

We have somewhat overshot our mark in order to complete the history of the English dominion in France. We now come back to the thirteenth century. Besides Normandy and Anjou, the forfeited goods of the felon John, the crown of France, during that century, obtained the county of Champagne by marriage, and that of Toulouse as the ultimate result of the Albigensian wars. Of the six lay peerages, Flanders and Burgundy alone remained. French Burgundy was granted out by Hugh Capet to a younger branch of his own family, and, when that race of dukes became extinct, the same policy was carried on by Charles the Fifth in 1363, when he invested his son Philip with the duchy. Philip obtained by marriage the remaining peerage, the county of Flanders. Under Philip the Good and Charles the Bold there seemed every prospect of Burgundy, in the later sense, becoming a greater kingdom than ever Burgundy had been in the old. The fiefs which the Dukes of Burgundy of the House of Valois held of the Empire and of the crown of France raised them to a place among the greatest powers of

Europe. At last the might and the hopes of Charles were shivered beneath the halbert of the free Switzer. Ducal Burgundy itself fell into the grasp of Lewis the Eleventh, and a fifth great fief was "reunited" to the Parisian crown. But Flanders remained, together with those Imperial fiefs which nature seems to have connected with it, to become not the least valuable possession of the universal monarchy of Charles the Fifth. For Flanders and for Artois Charles the Fifth was the nominal liegeman of his rival Francis. The Treaty of Madrid abolished this antiquated claim; and in vain did the Parliament of Paris, some years later, strive to win back the right, and to carry out against Charles the same process which, three hundred years sooner, had been so successfully carried out against John Lackland. The Count of Flanders and Artois was summoned to the court of his liege lord, and, as he did not appear, he was deprived of his lands for contumacy. But the sentence was more easily pronounced than executed against a Count of Flanders and Artois who was also Emperor of the Romans and King of Spain and the Indies. Flanders and Artois remained to the House of Austria till the wars of Lewis the Fourteenth incorporated all Artois and part of Flanders with the French monarchy. The rest of Flanders was reserved, by a happier lot, to form part of the free monarchy of Belgium.*

Thus, at various periods spread over more than four hundred years, all the great feudal states of France were gradually incorporated with the crown. On the other hand, the nominal boundaries of Capetian France have gone back in three places. The feudal superiority of the French crown extended over three districts which now form part of other states. As we have implied in our last paragraph, King Leopold owes no homage to the Parisian despot for the county of Flanders; nor is any

* The extreme northern part of the old county belongs to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, but much the greater part is Belgian.

paid by the Catholic Queen for the county of Barcelona,* the royal rights over which, even more nominal than elsewhere, were finally surrendered by Saint Lewis. Our own sovereign also retains, with the most perfect good will of the inhabitants, those insular portions of the duchy of Normandy against which Philip's sentence of forfeiture was pronounced in vain. With these three exceptions, the France of 1860 takes in the whole of the France of 987; it also takes in a great deal besides.

We have thus traced the steps by which the kings of Paris gradually gathered under their immediate dominion the whole, or nearly so, of those states which were at least nominally dependent upon them. We have now to follow the course of annexation in those countries which had never, even nominally, formed part of the Capetian monarchy. In so doing we may pass lightly over mere temporary conquests, and confine ourselves to those annexations which have really become part and parcel of the French monarchy. Thus the Valois kings were always conquering and always losing Naples and Milan, as well as Piedmont and Savoy; but Piedmont, Naples, and Milan have never permanently become parts of France. Thus again, under Napoleon the First, the French "empire" threatened to become the empire of all Europe; but happily this extended dominion did not descend to Napoleon the "Third." But we suspect that people in general are not aware how much territory, originally French in no sense, has been gradually and permanently swallowed up by the Parisian monarchy since the reign of Philip the Fair.

France, as it stood under the early Capets, was bounded to the south by the various kingdoms of Spain, to the east by the states holding of the Holy Roman Empire. With Spain France has had comparatively little to do. The existence of a real "natural boundary" may have had something to do with this; still the line of the Pyrenees

* [1860.]

has not always been held perfectly sacred on either side. More than one of the French kings held the kingdom of Navarre by a personal hereditary right. The Bourbon dynasty permanently bore the title; but their Navarre consisted only of that small portion of the kingdom which lies north of the Pyrenees. At the eastern end of the mountain range the frontier was long unsettled, and Roussillon did not finally become French till the Peace of 1659. In the space between Navarre and Roussillon, the sovereigns of France, in the character however not of kings but of Counts of Foix, have appeared in the more honourable aspect of protectors of the republic of Andorra. But the relations of France towards Spain are of far less importance than her relations towards the Empire. We left the German kingdom at the moment of its definitive separation from that of Western *Francia* in 888. In the next century Otto the Great permanently united to it the crown of Italy or the Lombard kingdom, and also the Imperial crown of Rome. In the next century the kingdom of Burgundy was acquired by virtue of the bequest of its last separate sovereign. Thus were the kingdoms of Germany, Italy, and Burgundy united under a single ruler. The King of the Eastern Franks inherited the Imperial style of Charles the Great, and he possessed three out of the four divisions of his Empire. He held alike the Teutonic and the Italian capital of the great Emperor. Western France might look like a single province torn away from the main body of the Frankish realm. During the first three centuries of the Capetian dynasty, France was weak and Germany strong. The great Saxon, Frankish, and Swabian Emperors wielded a far more practical authority over the whole of their vast dominions than the king of Paris wielded over his nominal realm of Latin France. But while the Capetians were gradually consolidating their power over France, the Emperors began to lose theirs over Germany and Italy, and in the greater part of their Burgundian dominions the Imperial authority

became more nominal still. Frederick Barbarossa was crowned at Arles as King of Burgundy; but a century afterwards the allegiance of Provence to King Rudolf of Habsburg was very precarious indeed. As France grew stronger and more united, she found her whole eastern frontier, from Hainault to Provence, formed by a succession of petty states, duchies, counties, bishopries, and free cities, disunited among themselves, and owning a very nominal subjection to their Imperial suzerain. The King of the French was to most of them at once a nearer and a more powerful neighbour than the Emperor of the Romans: he was a more dangerous foe and a more desirable friend. Some provinces had a greater likeness in language and manners to France than to Germany. To the nobles, and even to the princes themselves, the splendours of the French court offered a constant attraction. To take a familiar instance, the great house of Guise, in the sixteenth century, forsook their position as princes of the sovereign blood of Lorraine to assume that of French nobles and French party-leaders. The whole of these small states lay admirably open alike to French intrigue and to French violence; by one means or the other nearly all have been won. The five centuries and a half since Philip the Fair are one long record of French aggrandizement at the expense of the territories of the Empire.

Of the three kingdoms attached to the Empire, Italy has been constantly overrun by French armies, and portions, like Milan, Piedmont, and Genoa, have been held by France, by conquest or by some pretended hereditary right, for considerable periods. But no portion of the Italian mainland has been permanently retained by France. But in the last century, by one of the most disreputable of juggles, France obtained the Italian island of Corsica without a shadow of right, and has been repaid by obtaining from thence the line of her own tyrants.

The Kingdom of Germany has suffered large dismemberments. In the sixteenth century the three Lotharingian

bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun were won by a mixture of force and fraud; but it was only late in the last century that the duchy in which those bishoprics were *enclaves* was finally incorporated with France. The Peace of Westfalia gave France, not, as many people think, the whole of Elsass, but the possessions and rights of the House of Austria within it. Such a cession left large portions of the province legally as much parts of the Empire as they were before. But such a cession opened a most taking field for the process of "réunion," and the "réunion" went on bit-by-bit till the last robbery was done at the great Revolution. One act of this long drama stands out above all others, the seizing of Strassburg by Lewis the Fourteenth in a time of perfect peace. The same monarch, too, at the time when he recovered a portion of the old French fief of Flanders, seized also a portion of the Imperial fief of Hennegau—*Gallicè* Hainault.

But it has been against the old kingdom of Burgundy that the aggressions of the Parisian monarchy have been most constant and most successful. For that very reason they are much less familiarly known: there are more people who know that Lorraine has not always been French than there are people who know that the same is true of Provence. It is therefore specially desirable to trace them in order. We have seen that the old frontier, the "natural boundary," of France to the east, was the Rhone, the line above Lyons being continued along the Saone. The land between the Rhoné and the Alps was the kingdom of Boso, afterwards, as we have seen, united to the Imperial crown. At the expense of that kingdom France has, in the space of five centuries, gained fifteen departments, counting those which she has made out of her last stealings of Savoy and Nizza. The Burgundian kingdom, lying further away from the Imperial power than either Germany or Italy, fell away earlier and more completely than either, and split up into a host of small principalities and commonwealths. All of these, except those

which still retain their independence as portions of the Swiss League, have been gradually swallowed up by the vultures of Paris. The Rhone frontier was first permanently violated by Philip the Fair in 1310. In the free Imperial city of Lyons, as in so many others, violent disputes raged between the citizens and the prince-archbishops. Philip seized the favourable opportunity treacherously to occupy the city, and to reduce prince and people alike to bondage. Later in the century, the *Dauphiny* or county of Vienne was bequeathed by its last prince to the eldest son of the King of France for the time being, to be held as a separate sovereignty with the title of Dauphin. This of course soon sank into actual annexation. Lewis the Eleventh, in the next century, seized upon the county of Provence by a pretended hereditary right. The way to this acquisition was doubtless not a little smoothed by the fact that the sovereign counts had for some generations been princes of the blood-royal of France. Bresse and Bugey, part of the dominions of Savoy, were acquired by Henry the Fourth in exchange for the French claims on the marquisate of Saluzzo, a change which first made France an immediate neighbour of Switzerland. The little state of Orange was obtained in 1732 by exchange with Prussia. The county of Burgundy was first acquired in the fourteenth century, like Navarre, by a hereditary claim; but like Navarre, or like Hanover in the case of our own kings, it was separated again before it had been really incorporated with the French monarchy. It was not till the days of Lewis the Fourteenth that, after many vicissitudes, the once sovereign county-palatine of Burgundy, and the once free Imperial city of Besançon, were finally engulfed in the Charybdis of French domination. At the breaking-out of the French Revolution all that had escaped of the Burgundian kingdom was the duchy of Savoy, the western part of Switzerland and the neighbouring allies of the Swiss Leagues, and the papal possessions of Avignon and Venaissin, long surrounded by earlier annexations. All

these were swallowed up by the revolutionary torrent;* but all save the Papal territory recovered their independence by the settlement of 1814–15. The last act as yet of the drama, one surpassed in perfidious baseness by none of those which have gone before it, has been just performed beneath our own eyes.

It is, we think, not only curious as a piece of past history, but really important as a matter of present politics, to trace the gradual stages of French aggression in this quarter. A steady course of aggrandizement has been carried out for five hundred years, and the policy of the Capet has been continued by the Buonaparte. The first step was taken by Philip the Fair, the father of the old royal tyranny; the last step as yet has fallen to the lot of the kindred genius of Louis Napoleon;—we say the last step as yet, because it is impossible to believe that a voluntary check will be put on a settled scheme which is now all but accomplished. There is no difference in principle between the absorption of Savoy and Nizza and the absorption of Vaud and Neufchâtel. Whatever arguments justify the one would with an equally "irresistible logic" justify the other. We are told that Nizza and Savoy are provinces "essentially French;" they can be so only in a sense in which Geneva and Lausanne, and yet more Brussels and Saint Heliers, are essentially French also. Those obligations of treaties which guarantee the independence and neutrality of Switzerland are not more sacred than those which guarantee that neutrality of northern Savoy without which the independence of Switzerland is a name. That this scheme of aggrandizement, that all schemes of aggrandizement, are solemnly denied, proves about as much as was proved some months

* [No part of any of the old Swiss cantons was formally incorporated with France; indeed Vaud owed to France its independence of Bern. But Switzerland became practically dependent on France, and the allied states of Geneva, Wallis, Neufchâtel, and the bishopric of Basel, were actually seized.] [1871.]

ago by the no less solemn denial of all designs upon Savoy.* We have long learned how to trust the man whose lips uttered the words "Je le jure," and who kept the oath by a December massacre.

In short, among a crowd of ancient and independent states which have been gradually swallowed up, one alone remains. Switzerland, the very home and cradle of freedom, is the last remnant of the many centres of political life which once existed between the Rhone and the Alps. Marseilles, Lyons, Besançon, were once as free as Bern and Geneva. The Imperial Rabshakeh may stand before the still unattacked citadel of freedom, and point to the lands which he has destroyed utterly, and ask in his pride if the remnant which is left shall venture to hope for deliverance. French cannon bristling on the shores of the Lake of Geneva can be pointed in one direction only, that direction which French aggression has been constantly taking since the banner of the *fleur-de-lys* first showed itself east of the Rhone. It remains for Europe to determine whether it will sit by and see the perpetration of a wrong before which the annexations of Provence and Lorraine, and of Savoy itself, would sink into insignificance.†

We have thus traced out the long history of Parisian aggression; but, in common justice, we must make one remark on the other side. We said at the outset that, except for the monstrous deceptions by which they have always been defended, the aggressions of France are in no way more guilty than the aggressions of other powers; in one important respect France has much less to answer for than other conquering states. To be conquered by France has been at all times a less immediate evil than to be

* [1860.]

† [I let all this stand as it was written in 1860. It is well to bear in mind that France has ever been the same under all forms of government, and that Switzerland and Europe will have to keep on their guard against any kingdom or commonwealth which may arise out of the chaos of the moment, just as much as they had to keep on their guard against the fallen tyranny.] [1871.]

conquered by Spain, Austria, or Turkey. A province conquered by France has always been really incorporated with France: no French conquests have ever been kept in the condition of subject dependencies; their inhabitants have at once been admitted to the rights and the wrongs, the good and the evil fortune, of Frenchmen, and they have had every career offered by the French monarchy at once opened to them. No French conquest has ever been kept in the state in which Spain kept Milan, Naples, and the Netherlands, in which Austria has kept Hungary and Lombardy, in which the whole Ottoman Empire is kept to this day. Savoy will lose much by its transfer from the rule of constitutional Sardinia to that of despotic France, but there is no fear of its being brought down to the condition of Venetia. The geographical position of all the French conquests, except Corsica, has of course tended to this complete incorporation, as well as that inherent spirit of French centralization which tends to wipe out all local distinctions. One must allow that, if conquests are to be made, this is a generous and liberal as well as a prudent way of conquering. But it has its bad side also. The inhabitants of a country conquered by France become Frenchmen, and swell the ranks of the aggressors. The subtle process of denationalization cuts off that hope of undoing the evil work which always exists when a country is kept down under an avowed foreign tyranny. One cannot doubt that, when a part of the Spanish Netherlands was seized by Lewis the Fourteenth, the inhabitants found an immediate gain in becoming an integral portion of France, instead of a distant dependency of Spain. But the immediate gain has been an ultimate loss; had those provinces then remained to the House of Austria, they would now swell the strength of independent Belgium. So Elsass has not suffered at the hands of France as Hungary has suffered at the hands of Austria; but the hope of seeing an independent Hungary is a hope far less wild than that of seeing Elsass once more a member of a

German Confederation or Empire. The very best side of French aggression makes us feel the more sadly that there are *vestigia nulla retrorsum*.*

We have thus done our best to show that Parisian France in no way represents ancient Gaul or Carolingian *Francia*. France and the French are a modern power and a modern nation, of which we see the first glimmerings in the ninth century, and which attain something like a definite and lasting position in the tenth. France is essentially an artificial, advancing state, just like Sardinia and Prussia in more recent times. When mayors and bishops hail Louis Napoleon as the "successor of Pepin and Charlemagne," they are asserting a palpable untruth. Modern Europe contains no real successor of either; but least of all is the successor of the elected king of Aachen, the crowned Cæsar of Rome, to be looked for in the upstart usurper of Paris. The work of Charles was to make Italy and Gaul alike subject to a German monarch. No work could less call forth our sympathies at the present moment; but no work could be more unlike the process of extending the frontiers of the Celt of Paris over Italian, Burgundian, and Teutonic lands. Italy, in the eighth century and in the tenth, invoked a German king as her deliverer from her intestine troubles. No such remedy now is needed. She can now work her deliverance for herself, and she no more needs the hypocritical friendship of the Gaul than the open enmity of the Austrian. Before our eyes is growing up an Italian kingdom truer and freer than that of Charles and Otto, than that of Berengar and Hugh of Provence; and, with a slight change of name and style, we may apply to its first and chosen sovereign the words of the Papal benediction to Charles himself. Not altogether for his own sake, not forgetting the tortuous and faithless policy which bartered away the old cradle of his house, still, as to the

* [I rejoice to have been here a false prophet. The eleven years since this was written has given the world both a free Hungary and a German Elsass.] [1871.]

representative of Italian unity, we may say with heart and voice: "Victori Emmanueli, a Deo coronato, magno et pacifico Italorum regi, Romanorum imperatori futuro, vita et victoria!" *

* [Here, unlike the last note, I can rejoice in having been a true prophet. Rome is again the head of Italy. Whether its sovereign would do well to take up the title to which he, alone among Christian princes, has a real right, is another matter. A purely Italian Emperor would simply represent Majorian and Lewis the Second.] [1871.]

VIII.

THE EARLY SIEGES OF PARIS.*

THE events of the last few months have in a special way drawn the thoughts of men towards two cities which stand out among European capitals as witnesses of the way in which the history of remote times still has its direct bearing on things which are passing before our own eyes. Rome and Paris now stand out, as they have stood out in so many earlier ages, as the historic centres of a period which, there can be no doubt, will live to all time as one of the marked periods of the world's history. And it is not the least wonderful phænomenon of this autumn of wonders that, while our eyes have been drawn at once to Rome and to Paris, they have been drawn far more steadily and with far keener interest towards Paris than they have been drawn towards Rome. We can hardly doubt, whether we look back to the past or onwards to the future, that the fall of the Pope's temporal power is really a greater event than any possible result of the war between Germany and France. Yet such is the greater immediate interest of the

* [This essay was headed by the names of two books : *Les Comtes de Paris; Histoire de l'Avènement de la Troisième Race, par Ernest Mourin* (Paris, Didier & C^ie^) and *Robert der Tapfere, Markgraf von Anjou, der Stammvater des Kapetingischen Hauses. Von Dr. Phil. Karl von Kalckstein* (Berlin, Löwenstein). M. Mourin's book, dated at Angers in 1869, is a careful and pleasantly-written account of the origin of the Parisian kingdom, and it contains one or two good hits at the state of things in 1869. But it is amazing to see a man who has really read the authorities for the ninth and tenth centuries carried away by dreams about a French frontier of the Rhine. Dr. v. Kalckstein's is a most thoroughgoing monograph, working up all that is known about its hero from every quarter, but perhaps sometimes losing him a little in the general events of his age. A more careful study of his book, which I had barely time to glance at before the Article first appeared, has enabled me to add and modify some sentences, and to add some further references.] [1871.]

present struggle, such perhaps is the instinctive attraction of mankind towards the more noisy and brilliant triumphs of the siege and the battlefield, that the really greater event, simply because of the ease with which it has happened, has passed almost unnoticed in the presence of the lesser. The world has seen the Papacy in several shapes; but the shape of a Pontiff spiritually infallible but politically a subject, and the subject not of an universal Emperor but of a mere local king, is something which the world has not seen before. What may come of it no man can say; but we may be pretty sure that greater things will come of it, in one way or another, than can come out of any settlement, in whatever direction, of conflicting French and German interests. Still, at this moment, the present fate of Paris unavoidably draws to itself more of our thoughts than the future fate of Rome. But it is well to keep the two cities together before our eyes, and all the more so because the past history and the present position of those two cities have points in common which no other city in Europe shares with them in their fulness, which only one other city in Europe can claim to share with them in any degree.

The history of Rome, as all the world knows, is the history of a city which grew into an Empire. It grew in truth into a twofold, perhaps a more than twofold, Empire. Out of the village on the Palatine sprang the Rome of the Cæsars and the Rome of the Pontiffs. From Rome came the language, the theology, the code of law, which have had such an undying effect on the whole European world. Amidst all changes, the city itself has always been clothed with a kind of mysterious and superstitious charm, and its possession has carried with it an influence which common military and political considerations cannot always explain. And from the Old Rome on the Tiber many of these attributes passed—some were even heightened in passing—to the New Rome on the Bosporos. From the days of Constantine till now, no man has ever doubted that, in the

very nature of things, Constantinople, in whatever hands, must be the seat of empire. To Western eyes this seems mainly the result of her unrivalled geographical situation; over large regions of the East the New Rome wields the same magic influence which in the West has been wielded by the Old. *The* City,* the city of the Cæsars, is in Christian eyes the one great object to be won; in Mahometan eyes it is the one great object to be kept. By the Bosporos, as by the Tiber, it is the city which has grown into the Empire, which has founded it, and which has sustained it.

Now of the other capitals of Europe—the capitals of the more modern states—one alone can claim to have been, in this way, the creator of the state of which it is now the head. Berlin, Madrid, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Saint Petersburg, are simply places chosen in later times, for reasons of caprice or convenience, as administrative centres of states which already existed. Vienna has grown from the capital of a duchy into the capital of something which calls itself an empire; but Vienna, as a city, has had nothing to do with the growth of that so-called empire. London may fairly claim a higher place than any of the cities of which we have spoken. It was only by degrees, and after some fluctuations, that London, rather than Winchester, came to be permanently acknowledged as the capital of England. London won its rank, partly by virtue of an unrivalled military and commercial position, partly as the reward of the unflinching patriotism of its citizens in the Danish wars. But London in no way formed England, or guided her destinies. The history of London is simply that the city was found to be the most fitting and worthy head of an already existing kingdom. But Paris has been what London has been, and something more. Paris, like London, earned her pre-eminence in Gaul by a gallant and successful resistance to the Scandinavian enemy. It was the great siege of Paris in the ninth century which made Paris the chief

* Ἐς τὰν πόλιν = Stamboul.

among the cities of Gaul, and its count the chief among the princes of Gaul. Its position first marked it out for the rank of a local capital, and, through the way in which it used its position, it grew into the capital of a kingdom. But it did not, like London, simply grow into the capital of a kingdom already existing. The city created first the county, and then the kingdom, of which it was successively the head. Modern France, as distinguished both from Roman Gaul and from the Western kingdom of the Karlings, grew out of the county of Paris; and of the county of Paris the city was not merely the centre, but the life and soul. The position of Paris in the earliest times is best marked, as in the case of all Gaulish cities, by its place in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. It was a city, not of the first, but of the second rank; the seat of a bishop, but not the seat of a metropolitan.* Lutetia Parisiorum held the usual rank of one of those head-towns of Gaulish tribes which grew into Roman cities. But it never became the centre of one of the great ecclesiastical and civil divisions; it never reached the rank of Lyons, Narbonne, Vienne, or Trier. Twice before the ninth century, the discerning eye, first of a Roman and then of a Frankish master, seemed to mark out the city of the Seine for greater things. It was the beloved home of Julian; it was the city which Hlodwig at once fixed upon for the seat of his new dominion. But the greatness of Paris, as the earliest settled seat of the Frankish power, was not doomed to be lasting. Under the descendants of Hlodwig Paris remained a seat of royalty; but, among the fluctuations of the Merowingian kingdoms, it was only one seat of royalty among several. It was the peer of Soissons, Orleans, and Metz—all of them places which, in the new state of things, assumed a higher importance than had belonged to them in Roman times. But, as the Austrasian house of the Karlings grew, first

* We need hardly say that the archbishopric of Paris dates only from the seventeenth century. Up to that time the Bishop of Paris had been a suffragan of the Metropolitan of Sens.

as Mayors, then as Kings, to the lordship of the whole Frankish realm, the importance of the cities of Western Gaul necessarily lessened. Paris reached its utmost point of insignificance in the days of Charles the Great, whom French legends have pictured as a French king, reigning in Paris as his royal city. Whatever importance it had, it seems to have derived from its neighbourhood to the revered sanctuary of Saint Denis. By a strange accident, the first king of the new house—the house with which Paris was to wage a war of races and languages—died either in the city itself, or in the precinct of the great monastery beyond its walls. Pippin, returning from a successful campaign in Aquitaine, fell sick at Saintes; from thence he was carried to Tours to implore the help of Saint Martin, and thence to Paris to implore the help of Saint Denis. He died at Paris, and was buried in the great minster which became the burial-place of the next and rival line of kings.* But Paris was neither the crowning-place nor the dwelling-place of his son, nor was it the object of any special attention during his long reign. Of the two sons of Pippin, between whom his kingdom was immediately divided, Paris fell to the lot of Karlmann. But he chose Soissons for his crowning-place—the place where his father had been crowned before him.† Charles, crowned at Noyon, made Aachen his capital, and, in the course of his whole reign, he visited Paris only on a single progress, when it is incidentally mentioned among a long string of other cities.‡

* Eginh. Ann. 768: "In ipsa tamen valetudine Turonos delatus, apud Sancti Martini memoriam oravit. Inde quum ad Parisios venisset, viii. Kal. Octobris diem obiit, cujus corpus in basilica beati Dionysii martyris humatum est." So Vita Karoli, 3: "Apud Parisius morbo aquæ intercutis diem obiit." Mark the singular, but frequent, use of *Parisius* as an indeclinable noun.

† Eginh. Ann. 753, 768.

‡ Ibid. 800. The passage is worth quoting, as a specimen of the constant locomotion of the German kings:—"Redeunte vernâ temperie, medio fere Martio rex Aquisgrani digressus, litus oceani Gallici perlustravit, et in ipso mari, quod tunc piratis Nordmannicis infestum erat, classem instituit, præsidia

But this time of utter neglect was, in the history of Paris, only the darkness before the coming of the dawn. In the course of the next reign Paris begins to play an important part, and from that time the importance of the city steadily grew till it became what we have seen it in our own day. The occasional visits of Lewis the Pious to the city are dwelled on by his poetical biographer with evident delight, and with even more than his usual pomp of words.* And the city was now about to appear in its most characteristic light. In the words of Sir Francis Palgrave, who has sketched the early history of Paris with great power and insight,† "the City of Revo-

disposuit, pascha in Centulo apud sanctum Richarium celebravit. Inde iterum per litus maris iter agens, Ratumagum civitatem venit, ibique Sequana amne transmisso, Turonos ad sanctum Martinum orationis causa profectus est, moratus ibi dies aliquot propter adversam Liutgardæ conjugis valetudinem, quæ ibidem et defuncta et humata est; obiit autem diem ii. Non. Jun. Inde per Aurelianos ac Parisios Aquasgrani reversus est, et mense Augusto inchoante Mogontiacum veniens, generalem conventum ibidem habuit, et iter in Italiam condixit, atque inde profectus cum exercitu Ravennam venit, ibique septem non amplius dies moratus, Pippinum filium suum cum eodem exercitu in terram Beneventanorum ire jussit, movensque de Ravenna simul cum filio, Anconam usque pervenit, quo ibi dimisso Romam proficiscitur." This same visit to Paris seems to be alluded to by the monk of Saint Gallen, Gesta Karoli, i. 10 (Pertz, ii. 735); "Quum vero ingeniosissimus Karolus quodam anno festivitates nativitatis et apparitionis Domini apud Treverense vel Metense oppidum celebrâsset sequenti vero anno easdem sollemnitates Parisii vel Turonis ageret."

* Ermoldus Nigellus, ii. 143 (Pertz, ii. 481):

"Inde Parisiacas properant cito visere sedes,
Quo Stephanus martyr culmina summa tenet,
Quo, Germane, tuum colitur, sanctissime, corpus,
Quo Genuveffa micat, virgo dicata Deo.
* * * * *
Nec tua præteriit Dionysi culmina martyr,
Quin adiens tibimet posceret auxilium."

And again, iii. 269:

"Cæsar iter tutum per propria regna gerebat,
Usque Parisiaca quo loca celsus adit.
Jam tua martyr ovans Dionysi tecta revisit,
Hilthuin abba potens quo sibi dona paras;
Hinc, Germane, tui transivit culmina tecti
Martyris et Stephani, seu, Genuvefa, tui."

† History of Normandy and England, i. 279-281.

lutions begins her real history by the first French Revolution."* In this particular case we do not even grudge the premature use of the word "French," for the movement of which he speaks was plainly a movement of the Romanized lands of the West against their Teutonic master. It is not likely that any such feeling was knowingly present to the mind of any man; but nations and parties learn to shape themselves unknowingly, and cities and regions learn to play their fitting parts, before they can give any intelligible account of what they are doing. The Emperor was leading an expedition against the revolted Bretons; suddenly all the disaffected spirits of the Empire, his own sons among the foremost, gathered themselves together at Paris.† They then seized Lewis himself at Compiègne, and their hated stepmother Judith on the rock of Laon. But one part of his dominions was still faithful to the imprisoned Cæsar; the German lands had no share in the rebellion, and they eagerly sought for the restoration of their sovereign. In marking out the geographical divisions of feeling, the writer of the ninth century, like those of the nineteenth, is driven, as it were, to forestall the language of a somewhat later time. The Emperor had no confidence in the French, but he put his trust in the Germans.‡

* History of Normandy and England, i. 282.

† The fact that Paris was the gathering-place comes out most strongly in the Annales Bertiniani, 830 (Pertz, i. 423): "Nam aliqui ex primoribus murmurationem populi cognoscentes, convocaverunt illum, ut eum a fide, quam domno imperatori promissam habebant, averterent; ideoque omnis populus qui in Britanniam ire debebat ad Parisium se conjunxit, nec non Hlotharium de Italia et Pippinum de Aquitania hostiliter adversum patrem venire, ut illum de regno ejicerent et novercam suam perderent ac Bernardum interficerent, compulerunt."

‡ Vita Hludowici, 45 (Pertz, ii. 633); "Quum autem instaret auctumnalis temperies, ei qui imperatori contraria sentiebant alicubi in Francia conventum fieri generalem volebant. Imperator autem clanculo obnitebatur, diffidens quidem Francis magisque se credens Germanis." (See above, p. 192.) One cannot help talking here about *France* and *French*, though such is not the established use of the words till long after. It should however be noticed that the *Francia* of this writer, while it excludes Germany, equally excludes

Such was the part—a characteristic part—played by Paris in the Revolution of 830. Four years later Paris appears playing an opposite yet a no less characteristic part. The Emperor Lewis, already restored and again deposed, is held as a prisoner by his eldest son Lothar, and is led in bonds to Paris.* Again the men of the East, the faithful Germans, are in arms for their sovereign under Lewis, at that moment his only loyal son. But by this time the city has changed sides. Lothar, for fear of the German host, flees to the South, leaving his father at liberty; the late captive is led by his rejoicing people to the minster of Saint Denis, and there is girt once more with the arms of the warrior and with the Imperial robes of the Cæsar.† Once then in the course of its long history did Paris behold the inauguration of a lawful Emperor. But it was the re-inauguration of an Emperor whom one Parisian revolution had overthrown, and whom another Parisian revolution had set up again; and in the moment alike of his fall and of his restoration the force of loyal Germany forms at one time a threatening, at another time an approving, background.

We thus see Paris, well-nigh unheard of during the reign of Charles the Great, suddenly rise into importance under his son. Under Charles the Bald its importance becomes greater still, and it begins to assume the peculiar function which raised it to the head place in Gaul. The

Burgundy and Aquitaine. (See c. 49.) The assembly was held at Neomaga (Nimwegen), and we read that "omnis Germania eo confluxit imperatori auxilio futura."

* Annales Bertiniani, 834: "Quum hoc Lotharius cognovisset, de Aquis abscessit, et patrem suum usque ad Parisius sub memorata custodia deduxit." So in the Vita Hludowici, 50: "Hlotharius patre assumpto per pagum Hasbaniensem iter arripuit, et Parisius urbem petivit, ubi obviam fore cunctos sibi fideles præcepit."

† Annales Bertiniani, 834: "Illo abscedente, venerunt episcopi qui præsentes aderant, et in ecclesia sancti Dionysii domnum Imperatorem reconciliaverunt, et regalibus vestibus armisque induerunt. Deinde filii ejus Pippinus et Ludoicus cum ceteris fidelibus ad eum venientes paterno animo gaudenter suscepti sunt, et plurimas illis ac cuncto populo gratias egit, quod jam alacriter illi auxilium præbere studuissent."

special wretchedness of the time was fast showing the great military importance of the site. Under the rule of the Austrasian mayors and kings there had been endless wars, but they had been wars waged far away from Paris. Above all, no hostile fleet had for ages sailed up the Seine. Lutetia on her island must, under the Frankish power, have enjoyed for some generations a repose almost as unbroken as she had enjoyed in the days of the *Roman Peace*. Now all was changed. The Empire was torn in pieces by endless civil wars, wars of brother against brother; and the fleets of the Northmen, barely heard of in the days of Charles the Great, were making their way up the mouths of all its rivers. Men now began to learn that the island city, encompassed by the broad Seine, with its bridges and its minsters and the Roman palace on the left bank, was at once among the most precious possessions and among the surest bulwarks of the realm. It is not without significance that, when the great Charles himself for once visited Paris, he visited it in the course of a progress in which he had been surveying the shores of the Northern Ocean.* He came to Paris as a mourner and as a pilgrim, yet we may believe that neither his grief nor his devotion hindered him from marking the importance of the post. His eye surely marked the site as one fated to be the main defence, if not of his whole Empire, at least of its western portion, against the pirate barks by which the Ocean was beginning to be covered. And probably it was not by mere accident that it was in the course of an expedition against Britanny that Paris became the centre of the conspiracy of 830. In a Breton war, a war by land, Paris would not be of the same pre-eminent importance as it was in the invasion of the Northmen. Still the island stronghold would be of no small moment in case of a Breton inroad, and in the days of Lewis the Pious a Breton inroad was again a thing to be dreaded. Among the troubles

* See p. 216.

of the next reign the pre-eminent importance of Paris begins to stand out more and more strongly. Of the newly-formed Western kingdom, the kingdom of Charles the Bald, the kingdom to which it was a mere chance that he did not for ever bequeath his name,* it seemed at first that Paris was at once to become the capital; no other city filled so prominent a place in the early history of his reign. In the very beginning of his reign we find Charles making use of the position of the city and its bridges to bar the progress of his brother, the Emperor Lothar. We find him dwelling for a long time in the city, and giving the citizens the delight of a spectacle by appearing among them in royal pomp at the Easter festival.† Four years later, the city began to appear in its other character as the great mark for Scandinavian attack. The Northern pirates were now swarming on every sea, and the coasts of Britain, Gaul, and Germany were all alike wasted by their harryings. But they instinctively felt that, while no shore lay more temptingly for their objects than the shores of Northern Gaul, there was no point either of the insular or of the continental realm where their approach was better guarded against. The island city, with its two bridges and its strongly fortified Roman suburb on the mainland, blocked their path as perhaps no other stronghold in Gaul or Britain could block it.‡ In the very year of the fight of Fontenay,

* The Western kingdom is "regnum Karoli," its people Karoli, Karlenses, just like "regnum Lotharii," Lotharii, Lotharienses. (See History of the Norman Conquest, i. 600, ed. 2.) It is a mere chance that *Karolingia, Charlaine,* did not survive as the name of the Western kingdom, as *Lotharingia, Lorraine,* survived as the name of the Middle kingdom. It would have saved many confusions if it had.

† See the Annals of Prudentius of Troyes, 841 (Pertz, i. 437), and the story in Nithard, ii. 6–8; Palgrave, England and Normandy, i. 313, 314. Hildwin, Abbot of Saint Denis, and Gerard, Count of Paris—the first we remember bearing that title—had been among the first to break their oaths to Charles.

‡ See the vivid description of Carolingian Paris and its first capture in Palgrave, i. 433–439; but Sir Francis has not wholly withstood the temptation to exaggerate the antiquity of some of the existing buildings.

as if they had scented the mutual slaughter from afar, the Northmen had sailed up the stream, and had harried Rouen and the surrounding lands with the sternest horrors of fire and sword.* Four years later they pressed on yet further into the heart of the defenceless realm; Paris was attacked; in strange contrast with the valour of its citizens forty years later, no one had the heart to resist; the city was stormed and sacked; and King Charles, finding his forces unequal to defend or to avenge, was driven to forestall the wretched policy of Æthelred, and to buy a momentary respite from the invaders.† Other attacks, other harryings, followed. One devastation more terrible than all, in the year 857, was specially remembered on account of the frightful havoc wrought among the churches of the city. The church of Saint Genoveva, on the left bank of the river—whose successor is better known to modern ears as the Pantheon—was burned; Saint Stephen's, afterwards known as Nôtre Dame, Saint German's, and St. Denis, bought their deliverance only by large ransoms.‡

* Ann. Prud. Trec. 841 (Pertz, i. 437): "Interea piratæ Danorum ab Oceano Euripo devecti Rotumam irruentes, rapinis, ferro, ignique bacchantes, urbem, monachos, reliquumque vulgum et cædibus et captivitate pessumdederunt, et omnia monasteria seu quæcumque loca flumini Sequanæ adhærentia aut depopulati sunt aut, multis acceptis pecuniis, territa relinquunt."

† Ann. Prud. Trec. 855: "Nordmannorum naves centum viginti mense Martio per Sequanam hinc et abinde cuncta vastantes, Loticiam Parisiorum nullo penitus obsistente pervadunt. Quibus quum Carolus occurrere moliretur, sed prævalere suos nullatenus posse prospiceret, quibusdam pactionibus, et munere septem milium librarum eis exhibito, a progrediendo compescuit, ac redire persuasit." So in the Annals of Fulda, 845 (Pertz, i. 364): "Nordmanni regnum Karoli vastantes, per Sequanam usque Parisios navigio venerunt, et tam ab ipso quam incolis terræ accepta pecunia copiosa cum pace discesserunt."

‡ Ann. Prud. Trec. 857: "Dani Sequanæ insistentes cuncta libere vastant, Lutetiamque Parisiorum adgressi, basilicam beati Petri et sanctæ Genovefæ incendunt et ceteras omnes, præter domum sancti Stephani et ecclesiam sancti Vincentii atque Germani præterque ecclesiam sancti Dionysii, pro quibus tantummodo, ne incenderentur, multa solidorum summa soluta est." Sir Francis Palgrave (i. 459, 464) gives a vivid picture of this sack of Paris. Of Saint Denis he adds: "Saint Denis made a bad bargain. The Northmen did not hold to their contract, or another company of pirates did not consider it as binding: the Monastery was burnt to a shell, and a most heavy ransom paid

In the minds of the preachers of the time, the woes of Paris suggested the woes of Jerusalem, and a wail of sorrow went up from the Jeremiah of the age for the havoc of the city and its holy places.*

When we remember the importance to which Paris was plainly beginning to rise under Lewis the Pious, we may perhaps be led to think that it was the constant attacks to which the city was exposed which hindered it from becoming the permanent dwelling-place of royalty under Charles the Bald. That the city held a place in his affections throughout his life is shown by his choosing Saint Denis as the place of his burial. But it never became the royal city of the kings of his house. We need hardly look on it as a mark of personal cowardice in Charles that he preferred to fix his ordinary seat of government in some other place than the most exposed fortress of his kingdom. Compiègne now often appears as a royal dwelling-place ; † but the home and centre of Carolingian

for the liberation of Abbot Louis, Charlemagne's grandson by his daughter Rothaida." Sir Francis, as usual, gives no reference: but we may be sure that he could, if he had pleased, have given one for the burning of the monastery as well as for the capture of the Abbot, which the Annals mention under the next year, though not in connexion with the sack of Paris.

* Sir Francis Palgrave (i. 462) says: "Amongst the calamities of the times, the destruction of the Parisian monasteries seems to have worked peculiarly on the imagination. Paschasius Radbertus, the biographer of Wala, expatiates upon this misery when writing his Commentary on Jeremiah." Some extracts are given in Pertz, i. 450: "Quis umquam crederet, vel quis umquam cogitare potuisset ut piratæ, diversis admodum collecti ex familiis, Parisiorum attingerent fines, ecclesiasque Christi hinc inde cremarent circa litus? Fateor enim quod nullus ex regibus terræ ista cogitaret, neque ullus habitator orbis nostri audire potuisset quod Parisium nostrum hostis intraret."

† Compiègne comes out with amusing grandeur in the Fragmenta Historiæ Fossatensis, Pertz, ix. 372. There Charles the Bald figures as a very great prince indeed: "Hic post multas Imperii divisiones, post innumeras bellorum angustias, Pipino et Lothario decedentibus rex et imperator constituitur. Ludovicus autem Germaniam obtinebat. Quumque universo pene orbi Karolus imperaret, placuit præ ceteris nationibus Gallias honorare reliquiasque quas patruus suus Karolus Magnus Constantinopoli advectas Aquisgrani posuerat, clavum scilicet et coronam apud Sanctum Dyonisium; Compendium vero, quod instar Constantinopoleos suis diebus decreverat fabricari, ut de nomine suo Karnopolim, sicut Constantinus Constantinopolim, appellaret, sindonem delegavit."

royalty in the Western kingdom gradually fixed itself on a spot the most opposite to Paris in position and feeling which the Western kingdom could afford. Paris and Laon were in every sense rivals; their rivalry is stamped upon their very outward appearance. Each is a representative city: Paris, like Châlons and Bristol, is essentially an island city; the river was its defence against ordinary enemies, however easily that defence might be changed into a highway for its attack in the hands of the amphibious Northmen. But Laon is the very pride of that class of towns which, out of Gaulish hill-forts, grew into Roman and mediæval cities. None stands more proudly on its height; none has kept its ancient character so little changed to our own day. The town still keeps itself within the walls which fence in the hill top, and whatever there is of suburb has grown up at the foot, apart from the ancient city. Paris again was the home of the new-born nationality of the Romance speech, the home of the new French nation. Laon stood near the actual German border, in a land where German was still spoken; it was fitted in every way to be, as it proved, the last home of a German dynasty in the West. There can be little doubt that, by thus moving eastward, by placing themselves in this outlying Teutonic corner of their realm, the Carolingian kings of the West threw away the chance of putting themselves at the head of the new national movement, the chance of reigning as national kings, if not over the whole Romance-speaking population of Gaul, at least over its strictly French portion north of the Loire.

Of such a mission we may be sure Charles the Bald and his successors never dreamed. The chances are that those to whom that mission really fell dreamed of it just as little. We must never forget that the national movements of those days were for the more part instinctive and unconscious; but they were all the more powerful and lasting for being instinctive and unconscious. An act of Charles the Bald, one of the ordinary grants by a king to

one of his vassals, created the French nation. The post from which the King himself shrank was entrusted to a valiant subject, and Robert the Strong, the mightiest champion of the land against the heathen invader, received the government of the whole border-land threatened by the Breton and the Northman.* We may be sure that the thoughts of the King himself did not at the most reach beyond satisfaction at having provided the most important post in his realm with a worthy defender. To shield himself from the enemy by such a barrier as was furnished by Robert's county in Robert's hands was an object for which it was wise to sacrifice the direct possession even of the fair lands between the Loire and the Seine. The dominion of Robert was a *mark*; his truest title was *Marquess*. And this frontier district, like so many other frontier districts, was destined to great things. Rome itself was most likely, in its beginning, a *mark* of the Latin League against the Etruscan. Castile, a line of border-castles against the Saracen, grew into the ruling kingdom of all Spain. The Eastern Mark, the mark of Germany against the Hungarian, and the Mark of Brandenburg, her mark against the Wend, grew, under the names of Austria and Prussia, to become the leading powers of Germany, while one of them in a manner has become Germany itself. So the mark granted to Robert grew into the Duchy of France and the Kingdom of France. Robert no doubt, like the other governors and military chiefs who were fast growing from magistrates into princes, rejoiced in the prospect of becoming the source of a dynasty, a dynasty which could not fail to take a high place among the princes of Gaul. But he hardly dreamed of founding a line of kings, and a line of kings the most lasting that the world ever saw. Still less did he

* Regino, 861: "Carolus rex placitum habuit in Compendio, ibique cum optimatum consilio Roberto comiti ducatum inter Ligerim et Sequanam adversum Brittones commendavit, quem cum ingenti industriâ per aliquod tempus rexit." In the same writer, under 867, he appears as "Ruotbertus qui *marcam* tenebat." So Hincmar (ann. 865) calls him "*Marchio* in Andegavo." He held also the County of Autun. Hincmar, 866.

dream of founding a nation. But he himself founded a line of kings, and his son founded a nation for those kings to rule over. It may be doubted whether Robert's mark between the Loire and Seine took in the city on the Seine. Once indeed he went to its help;* but, if it was part of his dominions, it was at least not their capital or centre. Robert was in a special manner Count or Marquess of Anjou. It was his son, the Count of Paris, the defender of Paris, who was the real founder of the nation of which he became the first king. In saving Paris Odo created France. The counts who held the first place of danger and honour soon eclipsed in men's eyes the kings who had retired to the safer obscurity of their eastern frontier. The city of the river became a national centre in a way in which the city of the rock could never be. The people of the struggling Romance speech of Northern Gaul found a centre and a head in the rising city and its gallant princes. That Robert was himself of German descent, the son of a stranger from some of the Teutonic provinces of the Empire, mattered not a whit.† From the beginning of their historic life the Parisian dukes and kings have been the leaders and representatives of the new French nationality. No royal dynasty has ever been so thoroughly identified with the nation over which it ruled, because no royal dynasty could be so truly said to have created the nation. Paris, France, and the dukes and kings of the French, are three ideas which can never be kept asunder. A true instinct soon gave the ruler of the new state a higher and a more significant title. The Count of Paris was merged in the Duke of the French, and the Duke of

* Hincmar, 866.

† The origin of Robert the Strong has been discussed by M. Mourin, p. 19, and more fully by Dr. Kalckstein in his first "Exkurs." The best-known passage is that in Richer, i. 5: "Odo patrem habuit ex equestri ordine Rotbertum, avum vero paternum Witichinum, advenam Germanum." In Aimon of Fleury, *de Regibus Francorum* (Pertz, ix. 374), he appears as "Rotbertus Andegavensis comes, Saxonici generis vir." In the Annales Xantenses, 867 (Pertz, ii. 232), he is "Ruodbertus, vir valde strenuus, ortus de Frantia, dux Karoli." By this German writer *Frantia* is of course opposed to *Gallia*.

the French was soon to be merged in the King. The name of *Francia*, a name whose shiftings and whose changes of meaning have perplexed both history and politics—a name which Eastern and Western writers seem to have made it a kind of point of honour to use in different meanings*—now gradually settles down, as far as the Western kingdom is concerned, into the name of a territory which answers roughly to the Celtic Gaul of the elder geography.† It has still to be distinguished by epithets like *Occidentalis* and *Latina* from the Eastern *Francia* of Teutonic speech, but, in the language of Gaul, *Francia* and *Franci* for the future mean the dominion and the subjects of the lord of Paris. France was still but one among the principalities of Gaul; but it was the principality destined, by one means or another, to swallow up the rest. From the foundation of the Parisian duchy we may date the birth of the French state and nation. From that day onwards France is whatever can, by fair means or foul, be brought into obedience to Paris and her ruler.

Count Robert the Strong, the Maccabæus of the West-Frankish realm, the patriarch of the old Capets, of the Valois, and of the Bourbons, died as he had lived, fighting for Gaul and Christendom against the heathen Dane.‡ But his dominion and his mission passed to a son worthy of

* The monk of Saint Gallen (Gesta Karoli, i. 10) gives us a definition of *Francia* in the widest sense: "Franciam vero interdum quum nominavero, omnes Cisalpinas provincias significo in illo tempore propter excellentiam gloriosissimi Karoli et Galli et Aquitani, Ædui et Hispani, Alamanni et Baioarii, non parum se insignitos gloriabantur, si vel nomine Francorum servorum censeri mererentur."

† Richer (i. 14) twice speaks of the duchy of France as "Celtica" and "Gallia Celtica." "Rex [Karolus] Celticæ [Rotbertum] ducem præficit." These are Charles the Simple and the second Robert, afterwards king.

‡ Ann. Fuld. 867 (Pertz, ii. 380): "Ruodbertus Karoli regis comes apud Ligerim fluvium contra Nordmannos fortiter dimicans occiditur, alter quodammodo nostris temporibus Machabæus, cujus prœlia quæ cum Brittonibus et Nordmannis gessit, si per omnia scripta fuissent, Machabæi gestis æquiparari potuissent." See the details in Regino, 867; Hincmar, Ann. 866. The meagre annals of Fleury (Pertz, ii. 254) kindle into life at the exploits of Robert: "Rhothbertus atque Ramnulfus, viri miræ potentiæ armisque strenui et inter primos ipsi priores, Northmannorum gladio necantur."

him—to Odo, or Eudes, the second Count of his house, presently to be the first of the kings of Paris. At his father's death Odo was deemed too young to take the place of his father. The duchy between the Seine and the Loire was granted to Abbot Hugh ;* some fiefs alone of unknown extent were first given to Odo and then taken from him.† But somewhat later we find him holding the post of Count of Paris, without any notice as to the extent of territory which formed his county. But when at a later time, on the death of Hugh, he received a grant of his father's duchy, the great step was taken ; France, with Paris as its capital, was created.‡ The grant was fittingly made in the very midst of his great deeds, in the midst of that great struggle, that mighty and fiery trial, which was to make the name of Paris and her lord famous throughout the world. On the great siege of Paris by the Northmen, the turning-point in the history of the city, of the duchy, and in truth of all Western Europe, we may fairly dwell at somewhat greater detail than we have done on the smaller events which paved the way for it. We must bear in mind the wretched state of all the countries which made up the Carolingian Empire. The Northmen were sailing up every river, and were spreading their ravages to every accessible point. Every year in the various contemporary annals is marked by the harrying of some fresh district, by the sack of some city, by the desecration of some revered monastery.§ Resistance,

* Regino, 867: "Hugo abba in locum Ruotberti substitutus est siquidem Odo et Ruotbertus filii Ruotberti adhuc parvuli erant; quando pater exstinctus est, et idcirco non est illis ducatus commissus."

† Hincmar, 868: "Ablatis a Rotberti filio his quæ post mortem patris de honoribus ipsius ei concesserat [Carolus] et per alios divisis."

‡ Regino, 887: "Ducatus quem [Hugo] tenuerat et strenue rexerat Odoni filio Rodberti ab imperatore traditur, qui eâ tempestate Parisiorum comes erat."

§ See especially the entries in the Annales Vedastini (Pertz, ii. 200), under 874 and several following years. Take, above all, the general picture under 884: "Nortmanni vero non cessant captivari atque interfici populum Christianum, atque ecclesias subrui, destructis mœniis et villis crematis. Per omnes enim plateas jacebant cadavera clericorum, laicorum, nobilium atque aliorum, mulierum, juvenum, et lactentium : non enim erat via vel locus quo non jacerent

when there was any, was almost wholly local; the invaders were so far from encountering the whole force of the Empire that they never encountered the whole force of any one of its component kingdoms. The day of Saulcourt, renowned in that effort of old Teutonic minstrelsy which may rank alongside of our own songs of Brunanburh and Maldon,* the day when the young King Lewis led the West-Frankish host to victory over the heathen,† stands out well-nigh alone in the records of that unhappy time. While neither realm was spared, while one set of invaders ravaged the banks of the Seine and the Loire, while another more daring band sacked Aachen, Köln, and Trier,‡ the rival kings of the Franks were mainly intent on extending their borders at the expense of one another. Charles the Bald was far more eager to extend his nominal frontier to the Rhine,§ or to come back from Italy adorned with the Imperial titles,‖ than he was to take any active step to

mortui; et erat tribulatio omnibus et dolor, videntes populum Christianum usque ad internecionem devastari."

* The *Ludwigslied* is printed in Max Müller's German Classics, also in the second volume of Schilter's Thesaurus.

† A full account of the battle is given in the Annales Vedastini, 881.

‡ Annales Vedastini, 882: "Australes Franci (that is, Eastern, Austrasian, not Southern) congregant exercitum contra Nortmannos, sed statim terga vertunt, ibique Walo, Mettensis episcopus, corruit, Dani vero famosissimum Aquisgrani palatium igne cremant, et monasteria atque civitates, Treveris nobilissimam et Coloniam Agrippinam, palatia quoque regum et villas, cum habitatoribus terræ interfectis, igne cremaverunt."

§ Annales Fuldenses (Pertz, i. 390), 876: "Karolus vero, Hludowici morte comperta, regnum illius, cupiditate ductus, invasit et suæ ditioni subjugare studuit; existimans se, ut fama vulgabat, non solum partem regni Hlotharii, quam Hludowicus tenuit et filiis suis utendam dereliquit, per tyrannidem posse obtinere, verum etiam cunctas civitates regni Hludowici in occidentali litore Rheni fluminis positas suo regno addere, id est Mogontiam, Wormatiam, et Nemetum, filiosque fratris per potentiam opprimere, ita ut nullus ei resistere vel contradicere auderet." The first entry under the next year is: "Hludowicus rex mense Januario, generali conventu habito apud Francono-furt, quos de regno Karoli tenuit captivos remisit in Galliam."

‖ Ann. Fuld. 876. The way in which Charles' Imperial dignity is recorded is remarkable. After a satirical description of the Imperial costume, the annalist goes on: "Omnem enim consuetudinem regum Francorum contemnens, Græcas glorias optimas arbitrabatur, et ut majorem suæ mentis elationem ostenderet,

drive out the common enemy of all the kindred realms. At last the whole Empire, save the Burgundian kingdom of Boso, was once more joined together under Charles the Fat. Paris was again under the nominal sovereignty of an Emperor whose authority, equally nominal everywhere, extended also over Rome and Aachen. Precarious and tottering as such an Empire was, the even nominal union of so many crowns on a single head, however unfit that head was to bear their weight, does seem to have given for the moment something like a feeling of greater unity, and thereby of greater strength. Paris, defended by its own Count and its own Bishop, was defended by them in the name of the Emperor, Lord of the World.* The sovereign alike of East and West was appealed to for help, and at least a show of help was sent in the name of both parts of the Frankish realm.† The defence of Paris was essentially a local defence, waged by its own citizens under the command of their local chiefs. Still the great check which the invaders then received came nearer to a national act on the part of the whole Frankish Empire than anything which had happened since the death of Charles the Great.

Our materials for the great siege are fairly abundant. Several of the contemporary chronicles, in describing this gallant struggle, throw off somewhat of their accustomed meagreness, and give an account conceived with an unusual

ablato regis nomine, se imperatorem et Augustum omnium regum cis mare consistentium appellare præcepit." The phrase "cis mare" is remarkable, when we think of the English claims to Empire, and of the constant use of the word "transmarinus" to express England and English things. The common name for Charles in these Annals is "Galliæ tyrannus."

* Abbo, i. 48 (Pertz, ii. 780):—

"Urbs mandata fuit Karolo nobis basileo,
Imperio cujus regitur totus prope kosmus
Post Dominum, regem dominatoremque potentum,
Excidium per eam regnum non quod patiatur,
Sed quod salvetur per eam sedeatque serenum."

† Regino, 887 (Pertz, i. 596): "Heinricus cum exercitibus utriusque regni Parisius venit." "Utrumque regnum" means of course the East and the West Franks. The same Annals, in the next year, speak of Charles as reigning over "omnia regna Francorum."

degree of spirit and carried out with an unusual amount of detail.* And we have a yet more minute account, which, even as it is, is of no small value, and which, had it been a few degrees less wearisome and unintelligible, would have been of the highest interest. Abbo, a distinguished churchman of those times, a monk of the house of Saint German, and not only a contemporary, but a spectator and sharer in the defence,† conceived the happy idea of writing a minute narrative of the stirring scenes which he had witnessed. But unhappily he threw his tale into the shape of hexametres which have few rivals for affectation and obscurity. The poetical biographer of Lewis the Pious at least writes Latin; Abbo writes in a Babylonish dialect of his own composing, stuffed full of Greek and other out-of-the-way words, and to parts of which he himself found it needful to attach a glossary. Still, with all this needless darkness, he gives us many details, and he especially preserves many individual names which we should not find out from the annalists. A fervent votary of Saint German, a loyal citizen of Paris, a no less loyal subject of the valiant count who, when he wrote, had grown into a king, Abbo had every advantage which personal knowledge and local interest could give to a narrator of the struggle. Only we cannot help wishing that he had stooped to tell his tale, if not in his native tongue, whether Romance or Teutonic, yet at least in the intelligible Latin of Nithard in a past generation and of Richer in a future one.‡

* See especially the Annales Vedastini, 885–890; other details come from the Chronicle of Regino, 887–890.

† Let us take one out of several passages where he describes his own exploits (ii. 300–302):—

"Nemo stetit supra speculam, solus nisi sæpe
Jam sancti famulus dicti, lignum crucis almæ
In flammas retinens, oculis hæc vidit et inquit."

‡ The book is printed in the second volume of Pertz, 776–805. The Third Book has a sort of *Interpretatio* throughout. We give a few lines (15–18) as a specimen:—

"*laicorum*
Tapete undique villose populorum lectus in itinere,
Amphytappa laon extat, badanola necnon;

The poet begins with a panegyric on his city, in which he may, while dealing with such a theme, be forgiven for somewhat unduly exalting its rank among the cities of the world.* Its position, the strength of the island-fortress, connected with the mainland by its castles on either side, is plainly set forth.† The defenders of the city are clearly set before us: Odo the Count, the future King, as we are often reminded,‡ and Gozlin the Bishop, stand forth in the front rank. Around the two great local chiefs are gatherad a secondary band of their kinsfolk and supporters, clerical and lay. There is Odo's brother Robert, himself one day to wear a crown in the city which he defended, but in times to which the foresight of the poet did not extend; there is the valiant Count Ragnar; there is the warlike Abbot Ebles of Saint German's, whose exploits are recorded with special delight by the loyal monk of his house.§ A crowd of lesser names are also handed down to us, names of men

Ornamentum decorum valde amant vestem putam vel gumfan claram potionem par linteum.

Effipiam diamant, stragulam pariterque propomam.
lenocinatio *fugat* *paleam*
Agagula celebs aginat pecudes nec ablundam."

But the narrative portions of the poem, though often obscure enough, are not altogether in this style.

* Abbo, i. 10:—

"Nam medio Sequanæ recubans, culti quoque regni
Francigenum, temet statuis per celsa canendo:
Sum polis, ut regina micans omnes super urbes!
Quæ statione nites cunctis venerabiliori,
Quisque cupiscit opes Francorum, te veneratur."

† Ibid. i. 15:—

"Insula te gaudet, fluvius sua fert tibi giro
Brachia, complexo muros mulcentia circum
Dextra tui pontes habitant tentoria limfæ
Lævaque claudentes; horum hinc inde tutrices
Cis urbem speculare falas, citra quoque flumen."

‡ Ibid. i. 45:—

"Hic consul venerabatur, rex atque futurus,
Urbis erat tutor, regni venturus et altor."

§ Ibid. i. 66:—

"Hic comites Odo fraterque suus radiabant
Rotbertus, pariterque comes Ragenarius; illic
Pontificisque nepos Ebolus, fortissimus abba."

who had their honourable share in the work, but with whose bare names it is hardly needful to burthen the memories of modern readers. A great object of attack on the part of the Northmen was the castle which guarded the bridge on the right bank of the river, represented in after-times by the *Grand Châtelet.* The watchful care of the Bishop had been diligent in strengthening this and the other defences of the city; but the last works which were to guard this important point were not yet fully finished.* The Danish fleet now drew near, a fleet manned, so it was said, by more than thirty thousand warriors.† As in the tale of our own Brihtnoth,‡ the invaders began with a peaceful message. The leader of the pirates, Sigefrith, the sea-king—a king, as the poet tells us, without a kingdom§—sought an interview with Count Odo, and demanded a peaceful passage through the city. Odo sternly answers that the city is entrusted to his care by his lord the Emperor, and that he will never forsake the duty which has been laid upon him.‖ The siege now began; the Northmen strove to storm the unfinished tower. After two days of incessant fighting, and an intervening night spent in repairing the defences, the valour of the defenders prevailed. The Count and the Bishop, and the Abbot who could pierce seven Danes with a single shot of his arrow,¶ finally drove back the heathen to their ships; and, instead of the easy storm and sack which they doubtless looked for

* Ann. Ved. 885 : "Nortmanni, patrata victoria valde elati, Parisius adeunt turrimque statim aggressi, valide oppugnant; et quia necdum perfecte firmata fuerat, eam se capi sine mora existimant."

† Regino, 887 : "Erant, ut ferunt, triginta et eo amplius adversariorum millia, omnes pene robusti bellatores."

‡ See History of the Norman Conquest, i. 270, ed. ii.

§ Abbo, i. 38 : "Solo rex verbo, sociis tamen imperitabat."

‖ See above, p. 230.

¶ i. 107 :—

"Fortis Odo innumeros tutudit. Sed quis fuit alter?
Alter Ebolus huic socius fuit æquiperansque;
Septenos unâ potuit terebrare sagittâ,
Quos ludens alios jussit præbere quoquinæ."

on this as on earlier occasions, the Northmen were driven to undertake the siege of the city in form.*

One is a little surprised at the progress in the higher branches of the art of war which had clearly been made by the enemy who now assaulted Paris. The description of their means of attack, if not intelligible in every detail, at least shows that the freebooters, merciless heathens as they were, were thorough masters of the engineering science of their age.† But, through the whole winter of 885, all their attempts were unavailing. The skill and valour of the defenders were equal to those of the besiegers, and their hearts were strung by every motive which could lead men to defend themselves to the last. But early in the next year, in the February of 886, accident threw a great advantage into the hands of the besiegers. A great flood in the Seine swept away, or greatly damaged the lesser bridge, the painted bridge, that which joined the island to the fortress on the left bank of the river.‡ That fortress and the suburb which it defended, the suburb which contained the Roman palace and the minsters of Saint Genoveva and Saint German, were thus cut off from the general defences of the city. The watchful care of the Bishop strove to repair the bridge by night. But the

* Ann. Ved. 885 : "Dani, multis suorum amissis, rediere ad naves ; indeque sibi castrum statuunt adversus civitatem, eamque obsidione vallant machinas construunt, ignem supponunt, et omne ingenium suum apponunt ad captionem civitatis ; sed Christiani adversus eos fortiter dimicando, in omnibus exstitere superiores."

† Let us take Abbo's description (i. 205) of an engine which may have been only a sow or a tortoise, but which certainly suggests the Trojan horse :

"Ergo bis octonis faciunt mirabile visu,
Monstra rotis ignara ; modi compacta triadi,
Roboris ingentis, super argete quodque cubante
Domate sublimi cooperto. Nam capiebant
Claustra sinûs arcana uteri penetralia ventris
Sexaginta viros, ut adest rumor, galeatos."

‡ Ann.Ved. 886 : "Octavo Idus Februarii contigit grave discrimen infra civitatem habitantibus, nam ex gravissimâ inundatione fluminis minor pons disruptus est." It is called "pictus pons" by Abbo, i. 250. It was perhaps something like the bridges at Luzern, with their series of paintings of scriptural and other subjects.

attempt was forestalled by the invaders; the tower was isolated and surrounded by the enemy. The Bishop and the other defenders of the city were left to behold, to weep, and to pray from the walls, at the fate of their brethren whom they could no longer help.* The tower was fiercely attacked; the gate did not give way till fire was brought to help the blows of the Northmen; the defenders of the tower all perished either by the flames or by the sword, and their bodies were hurled into the river before the eyes of their comrades.† The conquerors now destroyed the tower, and from their new vantage-ground they pressed the siege of the island city with increased vigour.

The chances of war seemed now to be turning against the besieged. The stout heart of Bishop Gozlin at last began to fail; he saw that Paris could no longer be defended by the arms of its citizens only. He sent a message to Henry, the Duke of the Eastern Franks, praying him to come to the defence of the Christian people. The Duke came; we are told that his presence did little or nothing for the besieged city;‡ yet in the obscure verses of

* Ann. Ved. 886: "Illis vero qui intra turrim erant acriter resistentibus, fit clamor multitudinis usque in cœlum; episcopus desuper muro civitatis cum omnibus qui in civitate erant nimis flentibus, eo quod suis subvenire non possent, et quia nil aliud agere poterat, Christo eos commendabat."

† Ibid.: "Nortmanni cum impetu portam ipsius turis adeunt ignemque subponunt. Et hi qui intra erant, fracti vulneribus et incendio, capiuntur atque ad opprobrium Christianorum diversis interficiuntur modis, atque in flumine præcipitantur."

‡ Ibid.: "Herkengerus [the messenger sent by the Bishop, described as *Comes*] . . . Henricum cum exercitu Parisius venire fecit; sed nil ibi profecit . . . atque in suam rediit regionem."

Regino (887) makes the same confession: "Imperator Heinricum ducem cum exercitu vernali tempore dirigit, sed minime prævaluit." The Fulda Annals alone (886) seem to make out something of a case for Henry. His army "in itinere propter imbrium inundationem et frigus imminens non modicum equorum suorum perpessi sunt damnum." The annalist then adds: "Quum illuc pervenissent, Nordmanni rerum omnium abundantiam in munitionibus suis habentes, manum cum eis conserere nec voluerunt, nec ausi sunt." He goes on to say that they spent the whole of Lent and up to the Rogation-days in vain labours ("inani labore consumptis"). They then went home, having done nothing except kill some Danes whom they found outside their camp, and carry off a large number of horses and oxen.

the poet we seem to discern something like a night attack on the Danish camp on the part of the Saxon Duke and his followers.* But in any case the coming of the German allies did nothing for the permanent relief of the city. They went back to their own land; Paris was again left to its own resources; and at last the Bishop, worn out with sorrow and illness, began to seek the usual delusive remedy. He began to enter into negotiations with Sigefrith, which were cut short by the prelate's death. The news was known in the Danish camp before it was commonly known within the walls of Paris, and the mass of the citizens first learnt from the insulting shouts of the besiegers that their valiant Bishop was no more.†

The Bishop, as long as he lived, had been the centre and soul of the whole defence, yet it would seem that, at the actual moment of his death, his removal was a gain. We hear no more, at least not on the part of the men of Paris, of any attempts at treating with the enemy. One bitter wail of despair from the besieged city reaches our ears, and the hero of the second act of the siege now stands forth. The spiritual chief was gone; the temporal chief steps into his place, and more than into his place. Count Odo appears as cheering the hearts of the people by his eloquence, and as leading them on to repeated combats with the besiegers.‡

* Abbo, ii. 3:

"Saxonia vir Ainricus fortisque potensque
Venit in auxilium Gozlini præsulis urbis,
At tribuit victus illi letumque cruentis
Heu paucis auxit vitam nostris, tulit amplam
His prædam. Sub nocte igitur quadam penetravit
Castra Danûm, multos et equos illic sibi cepit."

After some further description he adds:

"Sic et Ainricus postremum castra reliquit,
Culpa tamen, fugiente mora, defertur ad arcem."

† Ann. Ved. 886: "Gauzlinus vero, dum omnibus modis populo Christiano juvare vellet, cum Sigfrido, rege Danorum, amicitiam fecit, ut per hoc civitas ab obsidione liberaretur. Dum hæc aguntur, episcopus gravi corruit in infirmitate, diem clausit extremum, et in loculo positus est in ipsâ civitate. Cujus obitus Nortmannis non latuit; et antequam civibus ejus obitus nuntiaretur, a Nortmannis de foris prædicatur episcopum esse mortuum."

‡ Ibid.: "Dehinc vulgus pertæsi una cum morte patris obsidione, irremedi-

At last hunger began to tell on the strength of the defenders; help from without was plainly needed, and this time it was to be sought, not from any inferior chief, but from the common sovereign, the Emperor and King of so many realms. Count Odo went forth in person on the perilous errand; he called on the princes of the Empire for help in the time of need, and warned the sluggish Augustus himself that, unless help came speedily, the city would be lost for ever.* Long before any troops were set in motion in any quarter for the deliverance of Paris, the valiant Count was again within its walls, bringing again a gleam of joy to the sad hearts of the citizens, both by the mere fact of his presence and by the gallant exploit by which he was enabled to appear among them. The Northmen knew of his approach, and made ready to bar his way to the city. Before the gate of the tower on the right bank, the tower which still guarded the northern bridge, the lines of the heathen stood ready to receive the returning champion. Odo's horse was killed under him, but, sword in hand, he hewed himself a path through the thick ranks of the enemy; he made good his way to the gate, and was once more within the walls of his own city, ready to share every danger of his faithful people.†

Such a city, we may well say, deserved to become the seat of kings, and such a leader deserved to wear a royal crown within its walls. Eight months of constant fighting passed away after the return of Odo before the

abiliter contristantur; quos Odo, illustris comes, suis adhortationibus roborabat. Nortmanni tamen quotidie non cessant oppugnare civitatem; et ex utrâque parte multi interficiuntur, pluresque vulneribus debilitantur, escæ etiam cœperunt minui in civitate."

* Ann. Ved. 886: "Odo videns affligi populum, clam exiit de civitate, a principibus regni requirens auxilium, et ut imperatori innotesceret velocius perituram civitatem, nisi ei auxilium detur."

† Ibid.: "Dehinc regressus, ipsam civitatem de ejus absentiâ nimis repperit mœrentem; non tamen in eam sine admiratione introiit. Nortmanni ejus reditum præscientes accurrerunt ei ante portam turris; sed ille, omisso equo, a dextris et sinistris adversarios cædens, civitatem ingressus, tristem populum reddidit lætum."

lord alike of Rome, of Aachen, and of Paris appeared before the city where just now his presence was most needed. Towards the last days of summer Duke Henry again appeared, but it was fully autumn before the Emperor himself found his way to the banks of the Seine.* Duke Henry came with an army drawn from both the Frankish realms, Eastern and Western.† With more show of prudence than he had shown at his former coming, Henry began by reconnoitring both the city and the camp of the enemy, to judge at what point an attack might be made with least risk.‡ But the Northmen were too wary for him. They had surrounded their whole camp with a network of trenches, three feet deep and one foot wide, filled up with straw and brushwood, and made to present the appearance of a level surface.§ A small party only were left in ambush. As the Duke drew near, they sprang up, hurled their javelins, and provoked him with shouts. Henry pressed on in wrath, but he was soon caught in the simple trap which had been laid for him; his horse fell and he himself was hurled to the ground. The enemy rushed upon him, slew him, and stripped him in the sight of his army.‖ One of the defenders of the

* "Æstivo tempore, antequam segetes in manipulos redigerentur," says Regino (887) of the coming of Henry, and adds. "Post hæc imperator . . . venit." This does not practically contradict the Annales Vedastini (886): "Circa auctumni tempora imperator Carisiacum veniens cum ingenti exercitu, præmisit Heinricum, dictum ducem Austrasiorum, Parisius."

† Regino, 887: "Idem Heinricus cum exercitibus utriusque regni Parisius venit."

‡ Ann. Ved. 886: "Qui quum advenisset illuc cum exercitu prope civitatem, cum paucis inconsulte cœpit equitare circa castra Danorum, volens invisere qualiter exercitus castra eorum posset attingere, vel quo ipsi castra figere deberent." To which Regino (887) adds: "Situm loci contemplatur aditumque perquirit, quo exercitui cum hostibus minus periculosus pateret congressus."

§ This is told most fully by Regino (887): "Porro Nordmanni audientes appropinquare exercitum, foderant foveas, latitudinis unius pedis et profunditatis trium, in circuitu castrorum, easque quisquiliis et stipulâ operuerant, semitas tantum discursui necessarias intactas reservantes."

‖ Ibid.: "Aspiciente universo exercitu, absque mora trucidant, arma auferunt, et spolia ex parte diripiunt."

city, the brave Count Ragnar, of whom we have already heard, came in time only to bear off the body, at the expense of severe wounds received in his own person.* The corpse of the Duke was carried to Soissons and was buried in the Church of Saint Médard. The army of Henry, disheartened by the loss of their chief, presently returned to their own homes. Paris was again left to its own resources, cheered only by such small rays of hope as might spring from the drowning of one of the besieging leaders in the river.†

The news of the death of Henry was brought to the Emperor. Notwithstanding his grief—perhaps an euphemism for his fear—he pressed on towards Paris with his army; but even the chronicler most favourable to him is obliged to confess that the lord of so many nations, at the head of the host gathered from all his realms, did nothing worthy of the Imperial majesty.‡ All in truth that the

* The exploit of Count Ragnar comes only from the Annales Vedastini: "Quum nudassent illum armis suis, supervenit quidam e Francis, Ragnerus nomine comes, ejusque corpus non absque vulneribus illis tulit; quod statim imperatori nuntiatum est." Regino says only, "Agminibus impetum facientibus, vix cadaver exanime eruitur." He adds, "Exercitus, amisso duce, ad propria revertitur."

† Abbo, ii. 217:

"En et Ainricus, superis crebro vocitatus,
Obsidione volens illos vallare, necatur.
Inque suos, nitens Sequanam transire, Danorum
Rex Sinric, geminis ratibus spretis, penetravit
Cum sociis ter nam quinquagenis, patiturque
Naufragium medio fluvii, fundum petiturus,
Quo fixit, comitesque simul, tentoria morti,
Hic sua castra prius Sequanæ contingere fundum
Quo surgens oritur, dixit, quam linquere regnum
Francorum, fecit Domino tribuente quod inquit."

‡ Regino, 887: "Post hæc imperator, Galliarum populos perlustrans, Parisius cum immenso exercitu venit, ibique adversos hostes castra posuit, sed nil dignum imperatoria majestate in eodem loco gessit." So Ann. Ved. 886: "Ille vero audito multum doluit; accepto tamen consilio, Parisius venit cum manu validâ: sed quia dux periit, ipse nil utile gessit." So the Annals of Fulda, 886: "Imperator per Burgundiam obviam Nortmannos in Galliam, qui tunc Parisios erant, usque pervenit. Occiso ibi Heinrico, marchensi Francorum, qui in id tempus Niustriam tenuit, rex, parum prospere actis rebus, revertitur in sua."

Emperor Charles did was to patch up a treaty with the barbarians, by virtue of which, on condition of their raising the siege of Paris, they received a large sum as the ransom of the city, and were allowed to ravage Burgundy without let or hindrance.* We are told indeed that this step was taken because the land to be ravaged—are we to understand the kingdom of Boso?—was in rebellion.† At all events, the Christian Emperor, the last who reigned over the whole Empire, handed over a Christian land as a prey to pagan teeth, and left Paris without striking a blow. Charles went straight back into Germany, and there spent the small remnant of his reign and life in a disgraceful domestic quarrel.‡ One act however he did which concerns our story. Hugh the Abbot, the successor of Robert the Strong in the greater part of his duchy, had died during the siege. The valiant Count of Paris was now, by imperial grant, put in possession of all the domains which had been held by his father.§

But the Count was not long to remain a mere Count; the city and its chief were alike to receive the reward of their services in the cause of Christendom. Presently came that strange and unexampled event by which the last Emperor of the legitimate male stock of the great Charles was deposed by the common consent of all his dominions. The Empire again split up into separate kingdoms, ruled over by kings of their own choice. The choice of the Western realm fell, as it well deserved to fall, upon the illustrious Count of Paris. Later writers, full of hereditary

* Ann. Ved. 886: "Factum est vere consilium miserum; nam utrumque, et civitatis redemptio illis promissa est, et data est via sine impedimento, ut Burgundiam hieme deprædarent." So Ann. Fuld. 886: "Imperator perterritus, quibusdam per Burgundiam vagandi licentiam dedit, quibusdam plurimam promisit pecuniam, si a regno ejus statuto inter eos tempore discederent."

† Regino, 887: "Ad extremum, concessis terris et regionibus quæ ultra Sequanam erant Nordmannis ad deprædandum, eo quod incolæ illarum sibi obtemperare nollent, recessit."

‡ The details follow immediately after in Regino.

§ See above, p. 227. So Ann. Ved. 886: "Terra patris sui Rothberti Odoni comiti concessa, imperator castra movit."

ideas, seem hardly to have understood the first election of a national king, and to have looked upon Odo as simply chosen as a guardian for the young heir of the Karlings, the future king Charles the Simple.* But Charles, instead of Odo's ward, appeared as his most dangerous rival. For the reign of Odo was not undisturbed, nor was his title undisputed. He had to struggle in the beginning of his reign with a rival in the Italian Guy, and in later years he had to withstand the more formidable opposition of Charles himself. And, chosen as he was by the voice of what we may now almost venture to call the French people, hallowed as king in the old royal seat of Compiègne by the hands of the Primate of Sens, the metropolitan of his own Paris,† Odo had still to acknowledge the greater power and higher dignity of the Eastern king. He had to acknowledge himself the man of Arnulf, to receive his crown again at Arnulf's hands, while Arnulf was not as yet a Roman Emperor, but still only a simple King of the East Franks.‡

* Aimon of Fleury, de Regibus Francorum (Pertz, ix. 374): "Karolus, qui Simplex postea est dictus, in cunis ævum agens, patre orbatus remansit. Cujus ætatem Franciæ primores incongruam, ut erat, exercendæ dominationis arbitrati, maxime quum jam recidivi Nortmannorum nuntiarentur motus, concilium de summis ineunt rebus. Supererant duo filii Rotberti; senior Odo dicebatur, Rotbertus alter, patrem nomine referens. Ex his majorem natu Odonem Franci, licet reluctantem, tutorem pueri regnique elegere gubernatorem, qui mente benignus et reipublicæ hostes arcendo strenue præfuit, et parvulum optime fovit, atque adolescenti et sua repetenti patienter regna refudit, a quo parte regni redonatus quo advixit tempore hostibus terribilis eique semper exstitit fidelis." This account leaves out all mention of Charles the Fat, as is done also in the Historia Francorum Senonensis (Pertz, ix. 365): "Post hæc defunctus est Hludovicus rex Francorum, filius Karoli Calvi, relinquens filium suum parvulum, Karolum nomine, qui Simplex appellatur, cum regno in custodiâ Odonis principis. Eo tempore gens incredula Normannorum per Gallias sese diffudit, cædibus, incendiis, atque omni crudelitatis genere debacchata. Deinde Franci, Burgundiones, et Aquitanenses proceres, congregati in unum, Odonem principem elegerunt sibi in regem." Alberic of Trois Fontaines, on the other hand, speaks of Charles the Simple as intrusted to the care of Odo by Charles the Fat.

† Ann. Ved. 888.

‡ Ibid.: "Odo rex Remis civitatem contra missos Arnulfi perrexit, qui ei coronam, ut ferunt, misit, quam in ecclesiâ Dei genitricis in natali sancti Briccii capiti impositam, ab omni populo rex adclamatur." Cf. Ann. Fuld.

Still the Count had become a king; the city which his stout heart and arm had so well defended had become a royal city. The rank indeed both of the city and its king was far from being firmly fixed. A hundred years of shiftings and changings of dynasties, of rivalry between Laon and Paris, between the Frank and the Frenchman, had still to follow. But the great step had been taken; there was at last a King of the French reigning in Paris. The city which by its own great deeds had become the cradle of a nation, the centre of a kingdom, had now won its fitting place as their head. The longest and most unbroken of the royal dynasties of Europe had now begun to reign. And it had begun to reign, because the first man of that house who wore a crown was called to that crown as the worthiest man in the realm over which he ruled.

But we must go back to the enemy before Paris. By the treaty concluded with the Emperor, they were to raise the siege, but they were left at liberty to harry Burgundy and other lands. The citizens of Paris however steadfastly refused to allow them to pass up the Seine; so the Northmen ventured on a feat which in that age was looked on as unparalleled.* They saw, we are told, that the city could not be taken; so they carried their ships for two miles by land, and set sail at a point on the river above the city.† While the Empire was falling in pieces, while new kingdoms were

888-895; Regino, 895. Arnulf was not crowned Emperor till 896. An amusing perversion of this confirmation by Arnulf will be found in Alberic des Trois Fontaines (888), who turns it into a confirmation by Charles the Fat: "Normanni, fugati a civitate Parisius, Senonas venerunt, quorum timore Waltherus Senonensis archiepiscopus unxit Odonem in regem, ut exiret contra eos. Fuit enim iste Odo frater ex matre supra dicti Hugonis abbatis, filii Karoli magni ex regina; unde aliqua erat ratio quod ei in tutela regni successit. Potuit igitur fieri, ut primo ungeretur ab archiepiscopo, postea confirmaretur, quod factum erat a memorato imperatore Karolo."

* Regino, 888: "Nordmanni, qui Parisiorum urbem obsidebant, miram et inauditam rem, non solum nostra, sed etiam superiore ætate fecerunt."

† Ibid.: "Quum civitatem inexpugnabilem esse persensissent, omni virtute omnique ingenio laborare cœperunt, quatenus urbe post tergum relicta classem cum omnibus copiis per Sequanam sursum possent evehere, et sic Hionnam fluvium ingredientes, Burgundiæ fines absque obstaculo penetrarent."

arising and were being struggled for by rival kings, the Northmen were harrying at pleasure. Soissons was sacked;* after a long and vain attack on the mighty walls of Sens, the enemy found it convenient to retire on a payment of money.† Meaux also, under the valiant Count Theodberht, stood a siege; but, after the death of their defender, the citizens capitulated. The capitulation was broken by the Northmen; the city was burned, and the inhabitants were massacred.‡ By this time Odo was King. Meanwhile the Northmen, after their retreat from Sens, had made another attempt on Paris, and had been again beaten off by the valiant citizens.§ The King now came to what was now his royal city, and established a fortified camp in the neighbourhood to secure it from future attacks.‖ Yet, when the Northmen once more besieged Paris in the autumn of 889, even Odo himself had to stoop to the common means of deliverance. The new king, the first Parisian king, bought off the threatened attack by the payment of a Danegeld, and the pirates went away by land and sea to ravage the Constantine peninsula, the land which, a generation or two later, was to become the special land of the converted Northmen.¶

Paris was at last secured against Scandinavian attack by

* Ann. Ved. 886. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

§ Regino, 889: "Nordmanni a Senonica urbe recedentes, denuo Parisius cum omnibus copiis devenerunt. Et quum illis descensus fluminis a civibus omnino inhiberetur, rursus castra ponunt, civitatem totis viribus oppugnant, sed, Deo opem ferente, nihil prævalent."

‖ Ann. Ved. 888: "Circa autumni vero tempora Odo rex, adunato exercitu, Parisius venit; ibique castra metatus est prope civitatem, ne iterum ipsa obsideretur."

¶ Regino, 890: "Civibus qui continuis operum ac vigiliarum laboribus indurverant, et assiduis bellorum conflictibus exercitati erant, audaciter reluctantibus, Nordmanni, desperatis rebus, naves per terram cum magno sudore trahunt, et sic alveum repetentes, Britanniæ finibus classem trajiciunt. Quoddam castellum in Constantiensi territorio, quod ad sanctum Loth dicebatur, obsident." The action of Odo comes from Ann. Ved. 889: "Contra quos [Danos] Odo rex venit; et nuntiis intercurrentibus, munerati ab eo regressi a Parisius, relictaque Sequana, per mare navale iter atque per terram pedestre et equestre agentes in territorio Constantiæ civitatis circa castrum sancti Laudi sedem sibi faciunt, ipsumque castrum oppugnare non cessant."

the establishment of the duchy of Normandy. By the Treaty of Clair-on-Epte in 913, Hrolf Ganger (changed in French and Latin mouths into Rou and Rollo) became the man of the King of Laon for lands which were taken away from the dominion of the Duke of Paris. Charles the Simple, the restored Karling, was now King; Robert, the brother of Odo, was Duke of the French; and there can be no doubt that the tottering monarchy of Laon gained much by the dismemberment of the Parisian duchy and by the establishment at the mouth of the Seine of a vassal bound by special ties to the King himself. The foundation of the Rouen duchy at once secured Paris against all assaults of mere heathen pirates. France had now a neighbour to the immediate north of her—a neighbour who shut her off from the sea and from the mouth of her own great river—a neighbour with whom she might have her wars as with other neighbours—but a neighbour who had embraced her creed, who was speedily adopting her language and manners, and who formed part of the same general political system as herself. The shifting relations between France and Normandy during the tenth and eleventh centuries form no part of our subject, but it will be well to bear in mind that Paris was at once sheltered and imprisoned through the Norman possession of the lower course of the Seine.

It follows then that the next besiegers of Paris came from a different quarter; and these next besiegers came from the quarter from which its last foreign besiegers have come. In the course of the tenth century, the century of so many shifting relations between Rouen, Laon, and Paris, while the rivalry between King and Duke sometimes broke forth and sometimes slumbered, Paris was twice attacked or threatened by German armies. Both the first and the second Otto at least appeared in the near neighbourhood of the city. In 946, the first and greatest of the name, not yet Emperor in formal rank, but already exercising an Imperial pre-eminence over the kingdoms into which the Frankish Empire had split up, entered the French duchy

with two royal allies or vassals in his train. One was the Burgundian King Conrad, lord of the realm between the Rhone and the Alps; the other was the nominal King of Paris and its Duke, Lewis, alike the heir of all the Karlings and the descendant of our own Ælfred, whose nominal reign over the Western kingdom was in truth well nigh confided to the single fortress of Compiègne. Among the shifting relations of the princes of the Western kingdom, Hugh Duke of the French and Richard Duke of the Normans were now allied against their Carolingian overlord. He had lately been their prisoner, and he had been restored to freedom and kingship only by the surrender of the cherished possession of his race, the hill and tower of Laon. Otto, the mighty lord of the Eastern realm, felt himself called on to step in when Teutonic interests in the Western lands seemed to be at their last gasp. The three kings united their forces against the two dukes, and marched against the capitals both of France and Normandy. But never were the details of a campaign told in a more contradictory way. There can be little doubt that Rouen was besieged, and besieged unsuccessfully. Thus much at least the German historian allows;* in Norman hands the tale swells into a magnificent legend.† What happened at Paris is still less clear. Laon, for the moment a French possession, was besieged unsuccessfully, and Rheims successfully.‡ Then, after a vain attempt on

* Widukind, iii. 4: "Exinde, collecta ex omni exercitu electorum militum manu, Rothun Danorum urbem adiit, sed difficultate locorum, asperiorique hieme ingruente, plaga eos quidem magna percussit; incolumi exercitu, infecto negotio, post tres menses Saxoniam regressus est."

† See Dudo's account in Duchesne, Rer. Norm. Scriptt., 130–134; or Palgrave, ii. 562–578.

‡ Richer, ii. 54: "Tres itaque reges, in unum collecti, primi certaminis laborem Lauduno inferendum decernunt. Et sine morâ, illo exercitum ducunt. Quum ergo ex adverso montis eminentiam viderent, et omni parte urbis situm explorarent, cognito incassum sese ibi certaturos, ab eâ urbe discedunt et Romos adoriuntur." He then goes on to describe the taking of Rheims. This is confirmed by Widukind, iii. 3: "Rex cum exercitu Lugdunum adiit, eamque armis tentavit." He places the taking of Rheims after

Senlis, the combined armies of the kings of Aachen, Arles, and Compiègne drew near to the banks of the Seine. Flodoard, the canon of Rheims, the discreetest writer of his age, leaves out all mention of Paris and its duke; he tells us only that the kings crossed the river and harried the whole land except the cities.* The Saxon Widukind tells us how his king, at the head of thirty-two legions, every man of whom wore a straw hat,† besieged Duke Hugh in Paris, and duly performed his devotions at the shrine of Saint Denis.‡ From these two entries we are safe in inferring that, if Paris was now in any strict sense besieged, it was at least not besieged successfully. But Richer, the monk of Saint Remigius, one of the liveliest tale-tellers of any age, is ready with one of those minute stories which, far more than the entries of more solemn annalists, help to bring us face to face with the men of distant times. The kings were drawing near to the Seine. In order that the enemy might be cut off from all means of crossing, the Duke of the French, Hugh the Great, had bidden all vessels, great and small, to be taken away from the right bank of the river for the space of twenty miles. But his design was hindered by a cunning stratagem of the invaders. Ten young men, who had made up their mind to brave every risk,§ went in advance

the attack on Paris, and afterwards, perhaps inadvertently, speaks of Laon as if it had been taken. *Lugdunum* is of course a mistake for *Laudunum*.

* Flodoard, 946 (Pertz, iii. 393): "Sicque trans Sequanam contendentes, loca quæque præter civitates gravibus atterunt deprædationibus."

† Widukind (iii. 2) records Otto's answer to a boastful message of Hugh: "Ad quod rex famosum satis reddit responsum; sibi vero fore tantam multitudinem pileorum ex culmis contextorum, quos ei præsentari oporteret, quantam nec ipse nec pater suus umquam videret. Et revera, quum esset magnus valde exercitus, triginta scilicet duarum legionum, non est inventus qui hujusmodi non uteretur tegumento, nisi rarissimus quisque." On these straw hats see Pertz's note.

‡ Widukind (iii. 3), immediately after the attempt on Rouen, adds: "Inde Parisius perrexit, Hugonemque ibi obsedit, memoriam quoque Dionysii martyris digne honorans veneratus est."

§ Richer, ii. 57: "Decem numero juvenes quibus constanti mente fixum erat omne periculum subire." He then describes their pilgrim's garb.

of the army of the kings, having laid aside their warlike garb and provided themselves with the staves and wallets of pilgrims. Protected by this spiritual armour, they passed unhurt and unchallenged through the whole city of Paris, and crossed over both bridges to the left bank of the river. There, not far from the suburb of Saint German, dwelled a miller, who kept the mills which were turned by the waters of the Seine.* He willingly received the comely youths who professed to have crossed from the other side of the river to visit the holy places. They repaid his hospitality with money, and moreover laid in a stock of wine, over which they spent a jovial day. The genial drink opened the heart and the lips of the host, and he freely answered the various questions of his guests. He was not only a miller; he was also the Duke's head fisherman, and he moreover turned an occasional penny by letting out vessels for hire. The Germans praised the kindness which he had already shown them, which made them go on to ask for further favours. They had still other holy places to pray at, but they were wearied with their journey. They promised him a reward of ten shillings—no small sum in the tenth century—if he would carry them across to the other side. He answered that, by the Duke's orders, all vessels were kept on the left bank to cut off the means of crossing from the Germans. They told him that it might be done in the night without discovery. Eager for his reward, he agreed. He received the money, and, accompanied by a boy, his stepson, he guided them to the spot where seventy-two ships lay moored to the river-side. The boy was presently thrown into the river; the miller was seized

* Richer, ii. 57: "Ille farinarium sese memorat, at illi prosecuti, siquid amplius possit interrogant. Ille etiam piscatorum ducis magistrum se asserit, et ex navium accommodatione questum aliquem sibi adesse." This miller of the Seine appears also in a story of Geoffrey Grisegonelle in the Gesta Consulum Andegavensium (D'Achery, Spicilegium, iii. 247): "In crastino consul furtivus viator, egreditur, non longe a Parisiaca urbe burgum sancti Germani devitans, a molendinario qui molendinos Secanæ custodiebat, dato ei suo habitu, navigium sibi parari impetravit."

by the throat, and compelled by threats of instant death to loose the ships. He obeyed, and was presently bound and put on board one of the vessels. Each of the Germans now entered a ship and steered it to the right bank. The whole body then returned in one of the vessels, and each again brought across another. By going through this process eight times, the whole seventy-two ships were brought safely to the right bank. By daybreak the army of the kings had reached the river. They crossed in safety, for all the men of the country had fled, and the Duke himself had sought shelter at Orleans. The land was harried as far as the Loire, but of the details of the siege of Rouen and of the siege of Paris, if any siege there was, we hear not a word.*

The military results of the first German invasion of France and Normandy were certainly not specially glorious. Laon, Senlis, Paris, and Rouen were, to say the least, not taken. All that was done was to take Rheims and to ravage a large extent of open country. But in a political point of view the expedition was neither unsuccessful nor unimportant. From that time the influence of the Eastern king in the affairs of the Western kingdom becomes of paramount weight, and under his protection, the King of the West-Franks, king of Compiègne and soon again to be king of Laon, holds a far higher place than before in the face of his mighty vassals at Paris and Rouen. The next German invasion, forty years later, found quite another state of things in the Western kingdom. The relations between King Lothar and Duke Hugh Capet were wholly different from the relations which had existed between their fathers, King Lewis and Duke Hugh the Great. No less different were the relations between Lothar

* All that Richer (ii. 58) tells us is that Otto's troops, after crossing the river, "terra recepti incendiis prædisque vehementibus totam regionem usque Ligerim depopulati sunt. Post hæc feruntur in terram piratarum ac solo tenus devastant. Sicque regis injuriam atrociter ulti, iter ad sua retorquent." The "terra piratarum" is of course Normandy.

and Otto the Second from those which had existed between their fathers Lewis and Otto the Great. The elder Otto had been a protector, first to his brother-in-law and then to his nephew; the younger Otto was only a rival in the eyes of his cousin.* On the other hand, it was the policy of Hugh Capet to keep up the dignity of the crown which he meant one day to wear, and not to appear as an open enemy of the dynasty which he trusted quietly to supplant. For a while then the rivalry between Laon and Paris was hushed, and the friendship of Paris carried with it the friendship of Rouen and Angers. Thus, while Lewis, a prince than whom none ever showed a loftier or more gallant spirit, was hunted from one fortress or one prison to another, his son, a man in every way his inferior, was really able to command the forces of the whole land north of the Loire. Again the king of Gaul looked Rhinewards; the border land of Lotharingia kindled the ambition of a prince who might deem himself king both of Laon and Paris. That border land, after many changes to and fro, had now become an acknowledged portion of the Eastern kingdom. But a sudden raid might win it for the king of the West, and the Duke of Paris would be nothing loth to help to make so great an addition to the kingdom which he meant one day to make his own. The raid was made; the hosts of the King and the Duke crossed the frontier, and burst suddenly on the Imperial dwelling-place of Aachen. The Emperor, with his pregnant wife, the Greek princess Theophanô, had to flee before the approach of his cousin, and Lothar had the glory of turning the brazen eagle which his great forefather had placed on the roof of his palace in such a direction as no longer to be a standing menace to the Western realm.† As in a more

* Lothar was the son of Lewis and of Gerberga the sister of Otto the Great; Lothar and the younger Otto were therefore cousins.

† Richer, iii. 71: "Æream aquilam quæ in vertice palatii a Karolo Magno ac si volans fixa erat, in Vulturnum converterunt. Nam Germani eam in Favonium converterant, subtiliter significantes Gallos suo equitatu quandoque posse devinci." So Thietmar of Merseburg, iii. 6 (Pertz, iii. 761), records the

recent warfare, the Gaul began with child's play, and the German made answer in terrible earnest. The dishonour done to their prince and his realm stirred the heart of all Germany, and thirty thousand horsemen—implying no doubt a far larger number of warriors of lower degree—gathered round their Emperor to defend and avenge the violated Teutonic soil. Lothar made no attempt to defend his immediate dominions; he fled to crave the help of his mighty vassal at Paris.* The German hosts marched, seemingly without meeting any resistance, from their own frontier to the banks of the Seine. Everywhere the land was harried; cities were taken or surrendered; but the pious Emperor, the Advocate of the Universal Church, everywhere showed all due honour to the saints and their holy places.† In primatial Rheims, in our own days to be the temporary home of another German king, the German Cæsar paid his devotions at the shrine of Saint Remigius, the saint who had received an earlier German conqueror still into the fold of Christ.‡ At Soissons Saint Médard received equal worship, and, when the church of Saint Bathild at Chelles was burned without the Emperor's knowledge, a large sum was devoted to its restoration. But if the shrines of the saints were reverenced, the palaces of the rival king were especially marked out for destruction. Attigny was burned, and nearly equal ruin fell upon Compiègne itself. Meanwhile the King had fled to Etampes, in the immediate

turning of the eagle and adds: "Hæc stat in orientali parte domûs, morisque fuit omnium hunc locum possidentium, ad sua eam vertere regna." The raid on Aachen is also described by Baldric in the Gesta Episcoporum Cameracensium, i. 96 (Pertz, vii. 440). He always speaks of Lothar as "rex Karlensium," and of his kingdom as "partes Karlensium." In Thietmar he is "rex Karolingorum." See above, p. 221.

* Richer, iii. 74: "Sic etiam versâ vice, Lotharium adurgens, eo quod militum copiam non haberet, fluvium Sequanam transire compulit, et gemebundum ad ducem ire coegit."

† Gest. Ep. Cam. i. 97: "Paternis moribus instructus, ecclesias observavit, immo etiam opulentis muneribus ditare potius æstimavit."

‡ Richer, iii. 74: "Per fines urbis Remorum transiens sancto Remigio multum honorem exhibuit."

territory of the Duke, while Hugh himself was gathering his forces at Paris. At last the German host came within sight of the ducal city. Otto now deemed that he had done enough for vengeance. He had shown that the frontiers of Germany were not to be invaded with impunity; he had come to Paris, not to storm or blockade the city, but to celebrate his victorious march with the final triumph of a pious bravado. He sent a message to the Duke to say that on the Mount of Martyrs he would sing such a Hallelujah to the martyrs as the Duke and people of Paris had never heard. He performed his vow; a band of clergy were gathered together on the sacred hill, and the German host sang their Hallelujah in the astonished ears of the men of Paris. This done the mission of Otto was over, and after three days spent within sight of Paris, the Emperor turned him to depart into his own land.*

Such, at least, is the tale as told by the admirers of the Imperial devotee. In the hands of the monk of Rheims the story assumes quite another shape, and in the hands of the panegyrist of the house of Anjou it inevitably grows into a legend.† Richer tells us how the Emperor stood for three days on the right bank of the river, while the Duke was gathering his forces on the left; how a German Goliath challenged any man of France to single combat, and presently fell by the dart of a French, or perhaps Breton,

* This story comes from Baldric, Gest. Ep. Cam. i. 97: "Deinde vero ad pompandam victoriæ suæ gloriam Hugoni, qui Parisius residebat, per legationem denuntians, quod in tantam sublimitatem Alleluia faceret et decantari in quanta non audierit, accitis quam pluribus clericis *Alleluia te martyrum* in loco qui dicitur Mons Martyrum, in tantum elatis vocibus decantari præcepit, ut attonitis auribus ipse Hugo et omnis Parisiorum plebs miraretur." The "Mons Martyrum" is, we need scarcely say, Montmartre.

† Gest. Cons. Andeg. vi. 2. Very little can be made of a story in which the invasion of Otto is placed in the reign of Robert, the son of Hugh Capet, who is represented as King, his father being still only Duke. The expedition of Otto is thus described: "Otto siquidem rex Alemannorum cum universis copiis suis Saxonum et *Danorum* Montem Morentiaci obsederat et urbi Parisius multos assultus ignominiose faciebat." Geoffrey Grisegonelle comes to the rescue with three thousand men.

David;* how Otto, seeing the hosts which were gathering against him, while his own forces were daily lessening, deemed that it was his wisest course to retreat.† As for the details of the retreat, our stories are still more utterly contradictory. One loyal French writer makes Lothar, at the head of the whole force of France and Burgundy, chase the flying Emperor to the banks of the Maes, whose waters swallowed up many of the fugitives.‡ The monk of Rheims transfers the scene of the German mishap to the nearer banks of the Aisne,§ while the Maes is with him the scene of a friendly conference between the two kings, in which Lothar, distrusting his vassal at Paris, deems it wiser to purchase the good will of the Emperor by the cession of all his claims upon Lotharingia.‖ The most striking details come from the same quarter from which we get the picture of the Hallelujah on Montmartre. The Emperor, deeming that he had had enough of vengeance, went away on the approach of winter:¶ he reached the Aisne and proposed to encamp

* Richer, iii. 76. The name of the French champion is Ivo.

† Ibid. iii. 77: "Otto, Gallorum exercitum sensim colligi non ignorans, suum etiam tam longo itinere quam hostium incursu posse minui sciens, redire disponit, et datis signis castra amoverunt."

‡ Rudolf Glaber, i. 3. His way of telling the whole story should be noticed: "Lotharius ut erat agilis corpore, et validus, sensuque integer, tentavit redintegrare regnum, ut olim fuerat." This is explained in the next sentence: "Nam partem ipsius regni superiorem, quæ etiam Lotharii regnum cognominatur, Otto rex Saxonum, immo imperator Romanorum [this means Otto the Great, 'primus ac maximus Otto'], ad suum, id est Saxonum, inclinaverat regnum." The retreat is thus described: "Lotharius ex omni Francia atque Burgundia militari manu in unum coactâ, persecutus est Ottonis exercitum usque in fluvium Mosam, multosque ex ipsis fugientibus in eodem flumine contigit interire."

§ Richer, iii. 77: "Axonæ fluvii vada festinantes alii transmiserant, alii vero ingrediebant quum exercitus a rege missus a tergo festinantibus affuit. Qui reperti fuere mox gladiis hostium fusi sunt, plures quidem at nullo nomine clari."

‖ Ibid. iii. 80, 81: "Belgicæ pars quæ in lite fuerat in jus Ottonis transiit." Rudolf Glaber clearly means the same thing when he says, "Dehinc vero uterque cessavit, Lothario minus explente quod cupiit."

¶ Gest. Ep. Cam. i. 98: "Qui [Otto] quum satis exhausta ultione congruam vicissitudinem se rependisse putaret, ad hiberna oportere se concedere ratus, inde simul revocato equitatu, circa festivitatem sancti Andreæ, jam hieme

on its banks. But by the advice of Count Godfrey of Hennegau, who warned him of the dangers of a stream specially liable to floods, he crossed with the greater part of his army, leaving on the dangerous side only a small party with the baggage.* It was on this party that Lothar, hastening on with a small force, fell suddenly, while a sudden rise of the stream hindered either attack or defence on the part of the main armies.† Otto then sends a boat across with a challenge, proposing that one or the other should allow his enemy to cross without hindrance, and that the possession of the disputed lands should be decided by the result of the battle which should follow.‡ "Nay, rather," cried Count Geoffrey, probably the famous Grisegonelle of Anjou, "let the two kings fight out their differences in their own persons, and let them spare the blood of their followers."§ "Small then, it seems," retorted Count Godfrey in wrath, "is the value that you put upon your king. At least, it shall never be said that German warriors stood tamely by while their Emperor was putting his life in jeopardy."‖ At this moment, when we are looking for

subeunte, reditum disposuit; remensoque itinere, bono successu gestarum rerum gaudens super Axonam fluvium castra metari præcepit."

* Gest. Ep. Cam. i. 98: "Paucis tamen famulorum remanentibus, qui retrogradientes—nam sarcinas bellicæ supellectilis convectabant—præ fatigatione oneris, tenebris siquidem jam noctis incumbentibus, transitum in crastino differre arbitrati sunt."

† Ibid: "Ipsâ etenim nocte in tantum excrevit alveolus, ut difficultate importuosi littoris neuter alteri manum conferre potuerit; hoc ita sane, credo, Dei voluntate disposito, ne strages innumerabilis ederetur utrimque."

‡ Ibid. The prize was to be, "Commissia invicem pugna, cui Deus annueret laureatus regni imperio potiretur." This challenge again reminds us of Brihtnoth. Compare the references in History of the Norman Conquest, i. 271, note 1.

§ Ibid.: "Quid tot ab utrâque parte cædentur? Veniant ambo reges in unum tantummodo, nobisque procul spectantibus, summi periculi soli subeuntes una conferantur, unoque fuso cæteri reservati victori subjiciantur."

‖ Ibid.: "Semper vestrum regem vobis vilem haberi audivimus non credentes; nunc autem vobismetipsis fatentibus, credere fas est. Numquam nobis quiescentibus noster imperator pugnabit, numquam nobis sospitibus in prœlio periclitabitur." Compare the proposal of the Argeians for a judicial combat to decide the right to the disputed land of Thyrea; Thuc. v. 41, *τοῖς δὲ Λακεδαιμονίοις τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἐδόκει μωρία εἶναι ταῦτα*, much as it seemed to Count Godfrey.

some scene of exciting personal interest, the curtain suddenly falls, and our most detailed narrator, turns away from the fortunes of emperors and kings to occupy himself with his immediate subject, the acts of the bishops of Cambray.*

Putting all our accounts together, it is hard to say whether, in a military point of view, the expedition of Otto the Second was a success or a failure. If his design was to take Paris, he certainly failed. If he simply wished to avenge his own wrongs and to show that Germany could not be insulted with impunity, he undoubtedly succeeded. In either case the political gain was wholly on the German side. King and Duke acted together during the campaign; but each, in its course, learned to distrust the other, and each found it expedient to seek the friendship of the Emperor as a check against his rival.† And more than all, the Imperial rights over Lotharingia were formally acknowledged by Lothar, and were not again disputed for some ages.‡

This campaign of 976 has a special interest just now, as its earlier stages read, almost word for word, like a forestalling of the events of the last and the present year of wonders. But it is a campaign which marks a stage in the history of Europe. It is the first war that we can speak of as a war waged between Germany and anything which has even the feeblest claim to be called an united France. When Otto the Great marched against Paris and Rouen, he was fighting in the cause of the

* His comment (Gest. Ep. Cam. i. 99) is: "Hoc igitur modo regibus inter se discordantibus, jam dictu difficile est quot procellis factionum intonantibus ab ipsis suis vassallis afficitur Tethdo episcopus."

† Richer, iii. 78. Lothar debates whether he shall oppose Otto or make friends with him: "Si staret contra, cogitabat possibile esse ducem opibus corrumpi, et in amicitiam Ottonis relabi. Si reconciliaretur hosti, id esse accelerandum, ne dux præsentiret, et ne ipse quoque vellet reconciliari. Talibus in dies afficiebatur, et exinde his duobus Ducem suspectum habuit." See also the story of Hugh's dealings with Otto (82–85).

‡ So Thietmar of Merseburg, iii. 6: "Reversus inde imperator triumphali gloriâ, tantum hostibus incussit terrorem ut numquam post talia incipere auderent; recompensatumque est iis quicquid dedecoris prius intulere nostris."

King of the West-Franks, the lawful overlord of the dukes against whom he was fighting. When Otto the Second marched against Paris, he was fighting against king and dukes alike, and king and dukes between them had at their call all the lands of the strictly French speech, the tongue of *oil*. Aquitaine, and the other lands of the tongue of *oc*, had of course no part or lot in the matter; then, as in later times, there were no Frenchmen south of the Loire. But if the expedition of Otto was in this sense the first German invasion of France, it was also for a long time the last. It is not often that Imperial armies have since that day entered French territory at all. The armies of Otto the Fourth appeared in the thirteenth century at Bouvines, and the armies of Charles the Fifth appeared in the sixteenth century in Provence. But Bouvines, lying in the dominions of a powerful and rebellious vassal, was French only by the most distant external allegiance; and Provence, in the days of Charles the Fifth, was still a land newly won for France, and the Imperial claims over it were not yet wholly forgotten. Both invasions touched only remote parts of the kingdom, and in no way threatened the capital. Since the election of Hugh Capet made Paris for ever the head of France and of all the vassals of the French kingdom, the city has been besieged and taken by pretenders, native and foreign, to the Capetian crown, but it has never, till our own century, been assailed by the armies of the old Teutonic realm. The fall of the first Buonaparte was followed by a surrender of Paris to a host which called up the memories alike of Otto of Germany and of Henry of England. The fall of the second Buonaparte was followed before our own eyes by the siege of Paris, the crowning-point of a war whose first stages suggest the campaign of the second Otto, but which, for the mighty interests at stake, for the long endurance of besieger and besieged, rather suggests the great siege at the hands of Sigefrith. But all alike are witnesses to the position

which the great city of the Seine has held ever since the days of Odo. Paris is to France, not merely its greatest city, the seat of its government, the centre of its society and literature; it is France itself; it is, as it has been so long, its living heart and its surest bulwark. It is the city which has created the kingdom, and on the life of the city the life of the kingdom seems to hang. What is to be its fate?* Is some wholly different position in the face of France and of Europe to be the future doom of that memorable city? Men will look on its possible humiliation with very different eyes. Some may be disposed to take up the strain of the Hebrew prophet, and to say, "How hath the oppressor ceased, the golden city ceased!" Others will lament the home of elegance and pleasure, and what calls itself civilization. We will, in taking leave of Paris, old and new, wind up with the warning, this time intelligible enough to be striking, of her own poet:—

"Francia cur latitas vires, narra, peto, priscas,
Te majora triumphâsti quibus atque jugâsti
Regna tibi? Propter vitium triplexque piaclum.
Quippe supercilium, Veneris quoque feda venustas,
Ac vestis preciosæ elatio te tibi tollunt!
Afrodite adeo, saltem quo arcere parentes †
Haud valeas lecto, monachas Domino neque sacras;
Vel quid naturam, siquidem tibi sat mulieres,
Despicis, occurrant? Agitamus fasque nefasque.
Aurea sublimem mordet tibi fibula vestem,
Efficis et calidam Tyria carnem preciosa.
Non præter chlamydem auratam cupis indusiari
Tegmine, decusata tuos gemmis nisi zona
Nulla fovet lumbos, aurique pedes nisi virgæ,
Non habitus humilis, non te valet abdere vestis.
Hæc facis; hæc aliæ faciunt gentes ita nullæ;
Hæc tria ni linquas, vires regnumque paternum
Omne scelus super his Christi, cujus quoque vates,
Nasci testantur bibli; fuge, Francia, ab istis!"

* [In January 1871 I did not foresee—who did?—a second siege of Paris—still less a burning of Paris—at the hands of Frenchmen.]

† That is, simply kinswomen; *parentes* in the French sense.

IX.

FREDERICK THE FIRST, KING OF ITALY.*

Of all the many odd freaks of diplomacy which we have seen of late, perhaps the very oddest was when an Austrian statesman last year defended the possession of Lombardy by his master on the ground that that province was "a fief of the German Empire." Considering that there never was such a thing as "the German Empire"—considering also that, if there was, Lombardy never was a fief of it†—considering again that Francis Joseph of Lorraine is in no sense the heir or successor of the old German kings—considering also that, if he were, it would by no means prove his right to any particular fief of their kingdom—considering all this, the statement, whether as a historical assertion or a political argument, is certainly remarkable in all its parts. We do not undertake to decide whether the diplomatist who made it was really so strangely ignorant himself, or whether he was, after the manner of diplomatists, merely practising upon the presumed ignorance of others. In either case it shows the reckless way in which people allow themselves to turn the facts of past times into political arguments about present affairs. If it is true in any sense that "Lombardy is a fief of the German Empire," it is equally true of all Germany, of

* [This Essay appeared in January 1861, and I keep the political allusions as they were then written. It is curious and pleasant to see all that ten years have done.

The peculiar title was chosen, because the Essay dealt mainly with the Italian side of Frederick, and also to show people that there had been Kings of Italy.] [1871.]

† [That is to say, Lombardy was a fief of the Roman Empire and of the Kingdom of Italy, not of the Kingdom of Germany.] [1871.]

the greater part of Italy and Belgium, of nearly all Holland, all Switzerland, and about a third of France. If Francis Joseph is lawful master of Lombardy, because Lombardy was "a fief of the German Empire," his claim must be equally good to be absolute lord of all the countries which we have reckoned up, to say nothing of vaguer claims to superiority over Poland, Denmark, England, and the world in general.

We have mentioned this diplomatic freak as an instance of the way in which the ancient relations of Germany and Italy may be misrepresented or misconceived from the German side. Not long ago we fell in with an Italian novel, fairly interesting, but not very remarkable, which shows how they may be misrepresented or misconceived from the Italian side. This novel, *Folchetto Malespina* by name, dealt with the days and the deeds of—since the great Charles himself—the greatest German who ever set foot upon Italian soil. Now most certainly any one who drew his idea of Frederick Barbarossa from that story alone would set him down as having as little business in Italy as Francis Joseph has at Venice and Cracow, or Louis-Napoleon at Rome and Chambéry. It would never occur to a reader of *Folchetto Malespina* that Frederick, German as he was, was the elected, crowned, and anointed King of Italy and Emperor of the Romans, a king whose sovereignty was acknowledged in theory by all Italy, and was zealously asserted in act by a large portion of the Italian nation.

It is most desirable, for the sake both of the present and the past, that misconceptions of this sort should not be allowed to confuse the right understanding of either. We undertook in a former Essay to show that Louis-Napoleon Buonaparte was not the successor of Charles the Great. We now assert, with equal confidence, that Francis Joseph of Lorraine is just as little the successor of the Saxon Ottos or the Swabian Fredericks. The legal and traditional rights of the old Teutonic kings have

absolutely nothing in common with the brute force of the modern Austrian tyranny. Let this be well understood on both sides, and it will be impossible to dress up an imposture of yesterday in the borrowed plumes of a fallen but still venerable power, and it will be needless to pervert and depreciate a great cause and a great man, because, at a superficial glance, his career seems to run counter to the cause which has the sympathy of every generous heart of our own day.

Our immediate business is to give a picture, both personal and political, of Frederick Barbarossa as the greatest and most typical of the German kings of Italy, and therein to show that there is absolutely nothing in common between the position of the old Swabian and that of the modern Austrian. We have chosen Frederick, both as being the most famous name among the Teutonic kings, and because he is really the best suited for our purpose. Charles the Great stands by himself, alone and without competitor. He was the founder; those who came after him were at most his successors. And again, the four centuries which elapsed between Charles and Frederick had greatly altered the position of the world. Charles belongs to the debateable ground between ancient and mediæval history; Frederick belongs to a century which is the most typical of all the middle ages. In the days of Charles much was still living and practical which in the days of Frederick had become matter of learning and tradition. Charles was really a Roman Augustus; he stepped, as naturally as a barbarian Frank could step, into the place of which the female usurper at Byzantium was declared unworthy. Frederick was a real king of Germany, and a king almost equally real of Italy; but the Imperial title was now little more than a magnificent pageant, to be disputed about by priests and lawyers. In the days of Charles, the Bishop of Rome was as clearly the subject of the Emperor as his rival at Constantinople. In the days of Frederick the Popes had reached that ambiguous condition,

neither subject nor sovereign, which was in truth the source of their most efficient power. In short, it would require the ingenuity of a French bishop to see any likeness between Charles the Great and anything now on the face of the earth. But Frederick comes near enough to us to be easily misunderstood. In his days the old *Francia* had vanished. Germany, France, and Italy, in the modern sense of those words, already existed. A King of Germany warring in Italy, now conquering, now conquered, building up with one hand, and pulling down with another, has enough of superficial likeness to phænomena of our own times to make it worth while to stop to show the points of real unlikeness. And again, Frederick is the best suited for our purpose of the post-Carolingian Emperors, if only because he is far the best known. Like Charles the Great, he has become a hero of romance: he has become, as it were, the patriarch of a nation, and his memory still lives in the German heart as the impersonation of German unity. Frederick was certainly not personally superior to his predecessors Otto the Great and Henry the Third; but he has contrived to attract to himself a greater portion of the world's lasting fame. Again, in the reign of Henry the Fourth the chief interest, as far as Italy is concerned, is of an ecclesiastical kind; in the reign of Frederick the ecclesiastical interest is subordinate to the political. Hildebrand himself is the arch-antagonist of Henry, but one cannot help looking at Alexander the Third chiefly as the ally of Milan. Again, Frederick Barbarossa, like all other German kings, and indeed like almost all other men, cannot be compared, in extent and variety of natural gifts, to his wonderful grandson and namesake. But the very genius of Frederick the Second, and the whole circumstances of his life, put him out of all competition. Frederick Barbarossa is essentially a man of a particular age and country; he is in everything, for good and for evil, a German of the twelfth century. But his grandson

can hardly be said to belong to any particular nation. The child of a German father and a Norman mother, born and brought up in his half-Greek, half-Saracen realm of Sicily, the first patron of the newborn speech and civilization of modern Italy, it is hard to say what blood or what culture predominated in him; but it is clear that the Teutonic element was the weakest of all. In the largeness of his views, in the versatility of his powers, he rises intellectually as far above his grandfather as he sinks beneath him morally. It is never desirable for history to descend, either with prudish or with prurient curiosity, into the secrets of private life; still it is impossible to avoid comparing the almost acknowledged harem of the second Frederick, his concubines and bastards openly thrust upon the world, with the seemingly decent and regular household of his grandfather. Perhaps indeed we may be more inclined to forgive the license which produced Manfred and Hensius, than the lawful matrimony which gave birth to Henry the Sixth; still, as concerns the men themselves, it is clear that the elder Frederick lived the life of a Christian king, and the younger that of a Saracen sultan. In matters coming more properly within the sphere of history, we cannot fancy Frederick Barbarossa wandering into the regions of forbidden religious speculation; but still less can we imagine him acting the part of a cruel persecutor of heretics,* without a particle of religious bigotry, simply to ward off the suspicion of heterodoxy from himself. Frederick the Second, in the higher parts of his character, was beyond his age, almost beyond all ages; but for that very reason he had but little real influence upon his own generation, and is least of all men to be taken as typical

* How far Frederick Barbarossa was responsible for the *death* of Arnold of Brescia does not seem quite clear; but to have spared a man whom every Catholic looked on as a heretic, and every Ghibelin as a traitor, would have required as keen a vision as that of Frederick the Second combined with a clemency beyond that of his grandfather.

of it. But the elder Frederick was one whose every idea was cast in the mould of his own age and nation. He devoted himself, with a steadfast and honourable devotion which won the respect of his enemies, to those objects to which it was natural that a German king of the twelfth century should devote himself. Most of those objects are utterly alien to the sympathies of our own time; many of them were opposed by those men of his own day with whom we are naturally most inclined to side. Still, a candid mind will ever honour the zealous devotion of a life to any cause not palpably unrighteous, and unstained by means which are palpably dishonourable. A prince whose life was mainly given up to crush the growing liberties of Italy appears at first sight as an object of something almost like abhorrence. But only look at him with the eyes of a contemporary German, or of an Italian of his own side, and we shall soon see that the enemy of Italy in the twelfth century was at least one of a far nobler mould than the Bourbon, the Corsican, and the Lorrainer, with whom she has had to struggle before our own eyes.

Our present object is chiefly to consider the character and position of Frederick with regard to the kingdom of Italy; his relations with powers like Poland and Denmark, his two crusades, even his internal policy in his German realm, hardly concern us. Now, fully to understand that position, we must, for a short space, take up that general thread of early mediæval history which we dropped in our Seventh Essay. We there saw that the great Frankish Empire of Charles the Great was, at least from the year 888, cut up into the four kingdoms of Eastern *Francia* or Germany, Western *Francia*, Burgundy, and Italy; and that of these it was Eastern *Francia*, the *Regnum Teutonicum*, which had by far the fairest claim to be looked upon as the true continuation of the kingdom of Charles and Pippin. The Eastern Frank clave to the tongue and manners of his forefathers, and kept possession of the city which was the great

Emperor's chosen dwelling during life and his resting-place after death. For nearly four hundred years the crown of Germany passed through a succession of dynasties, which produced at least their fair share of able and valiant kings. We have been so used for some ages past to look upon Germany as a country utterly divided, or united only by the loosest of federal ties, that we have some difficulty in realising the *Regnum Teutonicum* of the early middle age as a single kingdom, and, for those times, far from a disunited kingdom. Of course it would not answer modern ideas of English good government, still less Parisian ideas of centralization. A Duke of Saxony or Bavaria was a very formidable subject, and he had very little scruple about rebelling against his liege lord. But he was far more orderly and obedient than a Duke of Normandy or a Count of Flanders. In short, the Germany of Henry the Third was nearly as united as the England of Edward the Confessor, and incomparably more united than the France of Philip the First. A revolt in Germany, like a revolt in England, was a rebellion, and was felt and spoken of as such; but hostilities between Rouen and Paris have rather the character of foreign war. The object of the great Saxon war against Henry the Fourth was to dethrone the reigning king and to set up another, a tribute to his importance which the king of Paris never received from his refractory feudatories. While the King of the French never got farther from his capital than Orleans or Compiègne, the kings of the Teutonic kingdom were constantly moving from province to province and from city to city throughout the whole of their vast realm. Above all, while no diet or assembly of any kind brought the French feudatory into peaceful contact either with his lord or with his fellow-vassals, all Germany was constantly flocking together to those *Colloquia* which occupy as important a place in the pages of Lambert of Herzfeld as our own Witenagemôts, Great Councils, and Parliaments do in those of our own early historians. In a word, the Saxon,

Frankish, and Swabian Emperors were, in a true and practical sense, Kings of Germany; the early Capetians were only in the vaguest and most nominal way Kings of France.

But the kingdom of Germany was not the only realm which obeyed the sceptre of Frederick. For nearly two hundred years before his time it had been acknowledged that the prince who was elected to the sovereignty of the *regnum Teutonicum* acquired thereby at least an inchoate right to the iron crown of the Italian kingdom and to the golden crown of the Roman Empire. Otto the Great had appeared in Italy, at the call of the Italians themselves, as the most powerful among the successors of the Great Charles; he was crowned and anointed Emperor of the Romans, and, as Emperor of the Romans, he exercised the fullest sway over the Pontiff and the people of the Eternal City. From his time onward the rank of King of Germany was but a step to the higher rank of Roman Emperor; till at last the very name of the German kingdom was lost, and the prince who was crowned at Aachen, but not yet crowned at Rome, bore the title of King, instead of Emperor, of the Romans. It is easy to see that this increase of dignity proved the real ruin of the German kingdom. It involved at least one Italian campaign in every reign; each successive king had to fight his way to his Italian capital. It called off the sovereign from the affairs of his native kingdom to struggle with Popes and commonwealths in a land which it was vain to hope really to hold in any constant and regular obedience. And again, the very rank of Roman Emperor, with all the halo of superhuman grandeur which surrounded it, must have tended to diminish the real power of the German king. Cæsar Augustus might well be looked upon as almost too exalted to act as the local king of a particular kingdom. His power gradually diminished; the *Imperator Urbis et Orbis* at last owned hardly a foot of ground in his Imperial capacity, and another prince was formally acknowledged as sovereign of the city from which he drew his highest title.

Had therefore the German kings Otto, Henry the Third, and Frederick himself, sternly abstained from all intermeddling in Italian affairs, we can hardly doubt that the German kingdom would have greatly gained thereby. Perhaps their once compact and powerful realm might have remained compact and powerful to this day. But it would have required foresight more than human to refuse the Imperial crown for themselves and for their nation. National distinctions had not then made themselves so distinctly felt as they have since. The universal sway of the old Cæsars, its more recent renovation by Charles, were not yet forgotten among men. That there should be a Roman Cæsar was something in the eternal fitness of things; and to whom could that highest place on earth be so worthily decreed as to the best and most powerful of the successors of Charles? Again, a large part of the higher ranks in northern Italy were of German descent, and they probably had not yet wholly forgotten their German origin. And, though the speech of daily life was different in Germany and in Italy, yet the use of one language for every public purpose throughout Western Europe greatly tended to make national distinctions less strongly felt. Their practical effect was just as strong; but men did not then, as they do now, openly assert and act upon the principle that difference of race or language is a ground for difference of political government. We do not remember during the whole of Frederick's Italian warfare, any distinct and openly-avowed case of Italians as Italians acting against the German as a German. No man denied Frederick's right either to the Kingdom of Italy or to the Roman Empire. The only doubt was as to the nature and extent of his royal rights; and no doubt the growing republican spirit of the cities would quite as readily have disputed the rights of a native sovereign. And Frederick was throughout the chief of a large Italian party, who supported him with even greater zeal than his German countrymen. Possibly their loyalty was misplaced, but it

was loyalty to an acknowledged legitimate king, not traitorous adhesion to a foreign invader. Frederick was in Italy the king of a party; if he was cursed as a destroyer at Milan, he was worshipped as a founder at Lodi. The truth is that, in the twelfth century, Italian patriotism did not exist. Each man had the warmest local affection for his own city, but of Italy as a country he had no idea whatever. Indeed, as the cities more and more assumed the character of independent republics, as the notion of a separate Italian kingdom grew fainter and fainter, national as distinguished from local patriotism grew fainter and fainter also. A variety of circumstances in each particular case made the Emperor the friend of one city and the enemy of another. But the Milanese who resisted Frederick resisted the enemy, not of Italy, but of Milan; the men of Cremona and Pavia who followed his banner never dreamed that in supporting their own friend, they were supporting the enemy of their country. Difference of blood, speech, and manners may have silently aggravated the bitterness of the conflict; yet the German historian* holds up his hands in horror at the cruelty of the Italians to one another, compared with which the mutual hate of German and Italian was love and gentleness. Nowhere, in short, do we find any signs of that really national feeling which awoke in aftertimes, the feeling with which stout Pope Julius longed for the expulsion of the Barbarians, or that which now unites all Italy from the Alps to the Pharos in loathing at the sway of Austria. The union of Germany and Italy under a single king was, in truth, something utterly hopeless; the attempt to bring about such an union brought much of lasting evil on both countries; but openly to acknowledge that it was hopeless would have required a more long-sighted statesman than the twelfth century was likely to produce. We sympathize with the

* "Non ut cognatus populus, non ut domesticus inimicus, sed velut in externos hostes, in alienigenas, tanta in sese invicem sui gentiles crudelitate sæviunt quanta nec in barbaros deceret."—Otto Fris. lib. i. cap. 39.

Italian opponents of Frederick, but we sympathize with them rather as the assertors of civic freedom as against Imperial power than as the defenders of Italy against a foreign invader. Italy, in short, in the twelfth century was not an "oppressed nationality."

It was therefore in support of claims consecrated by long and venerable traditions, of claims admitted in name by the whole nation and zealously supported by a powerful party, that Frederick waged his long warfare in Italy. We have endeavoured to give some notion of the cause which he represented; we will now attempt to draw a picture of the man himself, and to give a slight sketch of his policy and actions as far as concerns Italy. In so doing we shall endeavour, as far as possible, to draw our estimate of the man and his acts directly from contemporary sources. It is of course impossible but that remembrances of Gibbon, Sismondi, and Milman should now and then influence us; but we have certainly done our best to form our judgement from the evidence of men who were spectators, and sometimes actors, in the events. Most of the chronicles of this period are to be found in the sixth volume of the great collection of Muratori. Among these, the first place in rank belongs to no less a person than Frederick himself, who gives a summary of the early events of his reign in a letter to Otto, Bishop of Freising, prefixed to that prelate's history. The second place in dignity and the first in importance is undoubtedly due to Otto himself. This episcopal historian was himself of princely, even of Imperial descent; he was the son of Leopold the Third, Margrave of Austria, by Agnes, daughter of the Emperor Henry the Fourth. But as this same Agnes, by her first marriage with Frederick the First, Duke of Swabia, was the mother of Duke Frederick the Second, the father of the Emperor Frederick, it follows that Bishop Otto was himself the uncle of the subject of his history. That history, as we have said, may be read in the sober text of Muratori;*

* [It has since appeared in one of the latest volumes of Pertz.]

but we have chosen rather to study it in a noble old copy, dated Strassburg 1515, ushered in with Imperial diplomas from King Maximilian, and adorned with abundance of Imperial eagles. Otto first wrote a general history of the world in seven books, ending with the election of his nephew Frederick, in 1152, followed by an eighth book, of a diviner sort, containing an account of what is to happen at the end of the world. Like all chronicles of the kind, it is valueless alike for prophecy and for early history, but it becomes useful as it draws near the writer's own time. He afterwards accompanied his Imperial nephew in his first Italian expedition, and wrote two books *De Gestis Friderici Primi*, which fill one of the highest places in the list of mediæval writings. He however unluckily gets no further than the fourth year of his hero's reign; but his work is continued in two books more by Radevic, a canon of his own church, down to 1160, the year in which Radevic wrote. Both these authors, of course, write from the Imperial side, but both seem to write as fairly as one can expect, and they are especially valuable in quoting contemporary documents. Otto writes like a prince, admiring his nephew without worshipping him, and showing throughout the wide grasp of a statesman, and a most remarkable spirit of observation in every way. Radevic, as becomes his place, is not the rival, but, as far as in him lies, the careful imitator of the prelate who promoted him. Both of them were high-minded German churchmen, and we look on their witness on the Emperor's side with far less suspicion than on that of the Imperialist writer next in importance. This is Otto Morena of Lodi, an Italian lawyer, who filled some judicial office under Frederick and the two preceding kings, Lothar and Conrad. We must remember that this was just the time when the study of the Civil Law was reviving; and there can be no doubt that its study was of no small advantage to the Imperial cause. Frederick came into Italy with the sword of Germany in the one hand and the books of Justinian in

the other. No doubt the jurisconsult of Lodi honestly saw in the Swabian king the true successor of Augustus and Constantine, the Cæsar of whom it was written that *quod principi placuit, legis habet vigorem.** But no doubt this conviction produced in the mind of Otto the Judge an allegiance of a far more servile kind than the Teutonic loyalty of Otto the Bishop. We can fully understand the enthusiastic affection which every citizen of Lodi would feel for his royal patron and founder; still we soon get wearied of the *sanctissimus*, the *dulcissimus*, the *Christianissimus*, and the whole string of superlatives which Otto delights to attach to every mention of the Imperial name. Otto's own chronicle goes down to 1162; both as judge and as annalist he was succeeded by his son Acerbus, an equally firm adherent to the Imperial cause, but who is somewhat less profuse in his adulation, and who does not scruple sometimes to pronounce censure on his master's actions. His attachment to Frederick himself never fails; but he paints in strong colours the evil deeds of the Imperial lieutenants during Frederick's absence,† and the little heed which the Emperor himself took to punish them.‡ The history of Acerbus Morena ends with his own death, in 1167; the record of that event, and the character of the author, were doubtless added by another hand.

These are the chief writers on the Imperial side. On the other side we have the too brief chronicle of the Milanese Sire Raul in the sixth volume of Muratori, and the life of Pope Alexander in the collection of the Cardinal of Aragon in the third. The sixth volume also contains a few smaller pieces on particular parts of the story; one of which is Buoncompagni's Narrative of the Siege of Ancona, a most interesting piece of description, but to which, as it is not strictly contemporary, it strikes us that Sismondi has given more weight than it deserves as a historical

* Inst. Just. lib. i. cap. ii. § 6.

† Apud Muratori, t. vi. col. 1127. ‡ Ibid. col. 1131.

document. We may remark generally, that the writers on the papal and republican side commonly speak of the Emperor with a strong feeling of respect. If we want good hearty abuse of Frederick Barbarossa, we must turn to the letters of our own Saint Thomas of Canterbury and his correspondents. The cause of the difference is obvious. To the French and English partizans of Alexander, Frederick was a mere distant bugbear, a savage enemy of the Church, to be abhorred as much or more than any Sultan of Paynimrie. Those who saw him nearer, even as an enemy, understood him better. Those who fought against him knew that they were contending with a noble and generous enemy, and with one who, after all, was their own acknowledged sovereign. Popes too always commanded, even from their own party, less of reverence in Italy than they did anywhere else; the sacrilegious warfare of the Ghibelin, which seemed so monstrous on this side the Alps, assumed a dye far less deep in the eyes of those among and against whom it was actually waged.

Frederick was elected King in 1152. He came to the crown by that mixture of descent and election which was so common in the early middle age, and which modern writers so constantly misunderstand. Nearly every modern state has settled down into a hereditary monarchy, and has enacted for itself a strict law of succession, because it has been found that, whatever arguments may be brought against that form of government, it has at least the great practical advantage of hindering dissensions and civil wars. Those earlier times had no clear idea of strict hereditary right; but the family feeling was intensely strong, and in those days the personal character of a king was everything. A king could not then be a mere constitutional puppet; a great man was loved or he was feared—in either case he was obeyed; a small man, with equal legal authority, was despised, disobeyed, perhaps deposed or murdered. The ideal king needed two qualifications: he must be the descendant of former kings, and

he must be himself fit for the kingly office. Hence we constantly find a king succeeded, not by the person whom we should call his next heir, but by him who was deemed the worthiest of the royal house. Thus Conrad, by his last will, recommended, not his son, but his nephew Frederick, as his fittest successor in his kingdoms; and the princes of those kingdoms confirmed his choice. Conrad's eldest son, who, according to a common practice, had been crowned in his lifetime as his successor, was dead; his second son was too young: Germany had no desire for such another minority as that of Henry the Fourth; Frederick was young, brave, vigorous; he united the blood of the two great contending houses; the son of a Ghibelin father and a Guelfic mother, he was the man of all others who might be expected to secure peace* at home and victory abroad. He was therefore unanimously chosen King by the assembly at Frankfurt, and he received the crown of the Teutonic kingdom † at Aachen, the royal city of the Franks.‡ But besides Germany, the newly-elected monarch had at least an inchoate right to the royal crowns of Burgundy and Italy and to the Imperial diadem of Rome. Of Burgundy we need say little more than that he visited the kingdom once or twice, that he secured his interest there by his marriage with the Burgundian princess Beatrice, and at last, rather late in his reign, in the year 1178, found leisure for a solemn coronation at Arles.§

But our interest centres round him in his character of King of Italy and Emperor of the Romans. Otto of Freising distinctly tells us that Italian barons took a part in Frederick's election at Frankfurt.‖ We know not who

* Otto Fris. ii. 2: cf. Urspergensis in anno (p. 295), who plays on the name Friedrich = *Pacis Dives.*

† "Post primam unctionem Aquisgrani et acceptam coronam Teutonici regni."—Ep. Frid. ap. Otton. Fris.

‡ "In sede regni Francorum, quæ in eadem ecclesia a Carolo magno posita est, collocatur."—Otto Fris. ii. 3.

§ "Anno Domini mclxxviii. iii. nonas Augusti Fridericus primus imperator coronatus fuit apud Arelatem."—Vit. Alex. iii. ap. Muratori, tom. iii. p. 447.

‖ "Non sine quibusdam ex Italia baronibus."—Otto Fris. ii. 1.

these Italian barons may have been, what was their number, or how far they were really entitled to speak in the name of the Italian kingdom. But whoever they were, whether many or few, whether they were summoned or came of their own accord, it is clear that their presence must have tended to give at least an outward appearance of right to the new king's claims over Italy, both in his own eyes and in those of others. As King-elect of Italy, his course was to hold an assembly of the Italian kingdom at Roncaglia, to receive at Milan the iron crown of the Lombard kings, and thence to advance to Rome, and there receive the golden crown of the Roman Empire at the hands of the Roman Pontiff. This was the regular course for each newly-elected king; in theory he went on a peaceful errand to his capital; in practice he commonly had to fight his way at every step. Two things always strike us in these Imperial progresses: no Emperor ever gets to Rome and leaves it again without meeting with more or less of resistance, and yet that resistance never assumes any organized national form. No man denies his claims; a strong party zealously asserts them; and yet no king is turned into an Emperor without bloodshed. The truth is that it was an utter unreality for a German sovereign of the twelfth century to attempt to unite Italy under his sceptre, yet no one fully understood that it was an unreality. The German king claimed only what his predecessors had always claimed; half Italy was ready to receive him with open arms; learned doctors of the Civil Law told him that his Imperial rights were something all but eternal;—how were his eyes to be opened? Rome herself lived upon memories of the past; she fluctuated between memories of the republic and memories of the Empire. Sometimes she set up a consul, a senator, a tribune; sometimes she welcomed the German invader as the true Augustus Cæsar. The whole atmosphere of the age seems saturated with this kind of unreality; it was unreal, but it was not knowingly put on; people thoroughly believed in it, and therefore the unreality

became real, and had most important practical results. We are half inclined to laugh when the German sovereign calls himself *Romanorum Imperator semper Augustus*,—when the German historian studiously adopts Roman language, talks about *urbs* and *orbis Romanus*, and dates from the foundation of the city of Romulus. It is quite impossible to avoid laughing, even at the great Frederick, when he writes, or causes some eloquent bishop to write in his name, to tell the Saracen Sultan that he is speedily coming to avenge the defeat of Crassus, and once more to restore his Empire to its widest limits under Trajan.* It sounds strangest of all when the Romans themselves send, first to Conrad and then to Frederick, asking him to come and live among them, and reign over them as a constitutional Emperor, the choice and the child of the Roman Senate and People.† This last was too much; when it came to this, Frederick did find out that, if he was to reign at all, it could only be as a Teutonic conqueror. The successor of Charles and Otto was not prepared to be told that he was a stranger whom Rome had taken in; and when Rome asked five thousand pounds of gold as the price of her recognition, Rome learned, in the triumphant words of Bishop Otto, that the Franks did not buy Empire with any metal but steel. All this was very absurd and very unreal; that is, we at this distance of time see that it was so. But it is not very wonderful that the men of the time were less clearsighted, that old traditions and venerable names were too strong for them. The result is, that, in reading the history of the times, we can fully sympathize with both sides. Our first and most natural sympathy is with the heroes of Italian freedom, the defenders of Milan, the founders of Alessandria, the men who routed Frederick himself upon the glorious field of Legnano. But we should do very wrong if we looked upon Frederick

* See Frederick's letter to Saladin, in Roger of Howden, ii. 357, Stubbs; Ralph of Diss, Decem Script. 640. The copy in Roger of Wendover (vol. ii. p. 429, ed. Coxe) leaves out the flourishes about Crassus and Marcus Antonius.

† See the letter to Conrad, Otto Fris., i. 28; the embassy to Frederick, ii. 21.

as a cruel and unprovoked aggressor, or on his Italian partizans as traitors to their native land. Neither side has a monopoly of right or a monopoly of wrong. As no candid man can read our own history of the seventeenth century, and not enter into the feelings alike of the best supporters of the King and of the best supporters of the Parliament, so, if we look upon Frederick and his enemies with the eyes of the twelfth and not with those of the nineteenth century, we shall find equal cause for admiration in the patriots of Lodi and in the patriots of Tortona, in the assertors of the venerable rights of the Roman Cæsar and in the assertors of the new-born freedom of the commonwealths of Lombardy.

Frederick then came into Italy as a claimant of strictly legal rights, but of rights which we can now see to have been inconsistent with the circumstances of the time. The Imperial rights in Italy could be exercised only by fits and starts. Frederick came after one of the periods of intermission. During the reigns of Lothar and Conrad the royal authority in Italy had fallen very low; Frederick came to raise it again, to claim and to win back every power which had been exercised by Charles and Otto and Henry the Third. But he did not come in exactly the same character as any of those great Emperors. They came at the prayer of Italy, as deliverers from utter anarchy, from the tyranny of cruel kings, or from the abominations of rival and wicked pontiffs. Frederick had no such advantage. During the practical interregnum which preceded his reign, a spirit had been at work, and a power had been growing up, in Italy against which earlier Emperors had not had to struggle. The freedom of the cities had made wonderful advances; municipalities were fast growing into sovereign commonwealths. With this spirit a king, anxious to assert his royal rights to the full, especially after a time of partial disuse, could not fail to come into conflict. Otto and Henry the Third came into Italy as champions of right against wrong; they did not sin against a freedom which in their days was not yet in being; Frederick unhappily

was driven to appear, as no earlier Emperor had appeared, as the direct enemy of freedom. The rights of the crown, as he understood them, and the rights of the republics, as the republics understood them, must have clashed sooner or later. The immediate occasion of his warfare with Milan is of comparatively little moment, because the immediate occasion, whatever it was, was not the real determining cause. In the narrative of Otto Morena the wrongs of Lodi hold the first place; the holy and merciful king comes mainly to deliver Otto and his fellow-citizens from Milanese oppression.* The Milanese Raul seems hardly to think Lodi worth speaking of: the sagacious Frederick† wishes to bring Italy under his power; Milan is at war with Pavia; his sagacity leads him to take the side of Pavia as the weaker city. Frederick's own laureate tells us how, through the neglect of former kings, the wicked had grown strong in Lombardy, and how the proud city of Saint Ambrose refused to pay tribute to Cæsar.‡ The Prince-Bishop of Freising sets forth a variety of motives as working on the mind of his Imperial nephew: the wrongs of Lodi are not forgotten, though they are less prominent in the pages of Otto the Bishop than in those of his namesake the Judge. The immediate occasion of the attack was almost accidental; the consuls of Milan wilfully led the King's army through a country where no provisions were to be had, and that at a time when the soldiers were nerally out of humour at the bad weather.§ Anyhow the :, which could not have been long put off, now began,—that great struggle which occupied thirty years out of the thirty-eight of the reign of Frederick.

* Otto Mor. ap. Muratori, tom. vi. col. 957 et seqq.

† "Rex Fedricus, homo industrius, sagacissimus, fortissimus." Ap. Mur., tom. vi. col. 1173.

‡ "De tributo Cæsaris nemo cogitabat;
Omnes erant Cæsares, nemo censum dabat;
Civitas Ambrosii velut Troja stabat;
Deos parum, homines minus formidabat."
Gedichte auf König Friedrich, p. 65.

§ Otto Fris., ii. 13.

We of course cannot pretend to give anything like a narrative of this long warfare. All that we can do is to comment on a few points which illustrate the character of Frederick and his cause. Primarily the war was a purely political one; it was only by accident that it put on anything of a religious character. The struggle between Frederick and Alexander the Third is not exactly analogous to the struggle between Henry the Fourth and Hildebrand, or to that between Frederick the Second and a whole succession of pontiffs. Pope and Cæsar never could pull together, and Frederick, almost as a matter of course, had several matters of dispute with Pope Hadrian. One indeed concerned nothing less than the tenure of the Imperial crown. The controversy turned on a word. Hadrian spoke of the *beneficium* which he had conferred upon Frederick by officiating at his Roman coronation.* Frederick, doubtless with a feudal lawyer at his elbow, asks if the word *beneficium* is meant to imply that the Emperor of Rome was a vassal of the Bishop of Rome. Hadrian disclaims any such intention; he held that he had done the Emperor a *benefit*, but he did not pretend to have invested him with a *benefice*. It is not unlikely that, if Hadrian had lived, a struggle of the Henry and Hildebrand type might have arisen between him and Frederick. As it was the strife was of another kind. Henry and Frederick the Second were, as far as Popes were concerned, open foes of the Church; Frederick the Second certainly was more sinned against than sinning; still, he was condemned, deposed, excommunicated, by pontiffs and councils whose authority was not disputed. Henry the Fourth indeed disputed the rights of Hildebrand and set up a Pope of his own; but he did not do so till his crimes had brought down upon him the wrath of the hitherto undisputed pontiff. Indeed, Henry did not enthrone his Anti-pope in Rome till Gregory had set up an Anti-Cæsar in Germany. The case of Frederick Barbarossa was quite different; he was not the

* Rad. Fris., iii. 15 et seqq.

foe of the Church, but merely of that party in the Church which triumphed in the end. The Roman see was the subject of a disputed election: the accounts of that election are so utterly contradictory that it seems quite impossible to adopt either statement without imputing (what one is always loth to do) direct falsehood to the other party. Frederick had to choose between the rival pontiffs, and he doubtless chose the one whose disposition best suited his policy. Roland, otherwise Alexander the Third, had already shown himself a strong assertor of hierarchical claims; Octavian, otherwise Victor, was more disposed—at all events while his party was the weaker—to yield to the successor of Constantine and Justinian that loyal submission which Constantine and Justinian* had most certainly exacted from his predecessors. The cause of Alexander naturally triumphed; a Pope reigning under Imperial protection was no Pope at all; Frederick's very support of Victor drove strict churchmen to the side of Alexander. Again, the mere fact of Alexander's long reign, which allowed the papal power to be wielded for many successive years by the same hand, greatly contributed to his strength and dignity, as contrasted with the quick succession of the Imperialist anti-popes. Above all, Alexander, the spiritual enemy of Frederick, found it politic to coalesce with his temporal enemies; and the combined strength of the Church and the republics proved in the end too much for the arms of Cæsar. Frederick was at last driven to seek absolution from the Pope, and to acknowledge the liberties of the cities. As Alexander was thus in the end triumphant, the Church has branded Victor, his successors and his adherents, with the charge of schism; and Frederick, in the invectives of churchmen in other lands, appears in the odious character of a persecutor. Still one might think that to choose the wrong Pope in a warmly-disputed and very doubtful case was at worst a venial sin: it does not appear that Frederick

* Pope Hadrian was unlucky in quoting Justinian as the type of Imperial reverence for the papacy. Rad. Fris., iii. 15.

sinned against any acknowledged principle of the religion of his age; his warfare was not against the popedom, but against a particular pope, whom he denounced, and whom he may well have sincerely looked on, as an usurper of the Holy See.

Our estimate of Frederick's personal character will be mainly determined by the estimate which we may form of his conduct during this long war. Assuming its justice from his own point of view, we can hardly fail to honour his untiring devotion to the cause which he had taken in hand. It is of course easy to say that that cause was simply his own exaltation. It would of course be easy to draw a touching picture of all the miseries of war,—of slaughter and plunder and devastation, of stately cities levelled with the ground, of men, women, and children driven from their native homes—merely that one man might enjoy the delight of exercising increased power, or that he might gratify the more childish desire for an useless bauble and an empty title. Nothing would be easier than to accumulate charges of cruelty, obstinacy, and disregard of human suffering, against a sovereign who spent nearly his whole reign in warring against his own subjects. Talk of this sort is extremely easy, but it would give a very false view of the case. No one, we think, can go through the history of the time without clearly seeing that Frederick was not actuated by any low personal ambition, but that he felt himself to have a mission, to which he zealously and sincerely devoted himself. To him the rights of the Roman Empire were a sacred cause, in whose behalf he was ready to spend and to be spent. He was doubtless stirred up by as clear a sense of duty to assert his Imperial claims as any Milanese patriot was stirred up to withstand them. Of course, in fighting for the rights of the Empire, he was also fighting for his own greatness and glory. And what man is there who can quite separate himself from his cause? Heroes, patriots, martyrs at the stake, do and suffer for a cause which they hold to be righteous; but it is utterly

impossible that they can wholly forget that the triumph of their cause brings success and power to themselves, and that, even in defeat and martyrdom, they win the fame and sympathy of mankind. Take the very purest of men, heroes whom no temptation of rank or wealth or power could ever corrupt for a moment,—Timoleôn, Washington, or Garibaldi,—even they, we cannot but believe, must feel a greater excitement in the path of duty from the thought that they are winning for themselves the present love and gratitude of their fellow-citizens, and everlasting glory in the pages of history. That Frederick therefore was fighting in the cause of his own greatness really proves nothing against him. His purpose was no petty, passionate, momentary ambition, such as has too often influenced the policy of rulers in all ages. We see in him a steady untiring devotion to a cause which, in his eyes, was the cause of right. That we do not sympathize with his cause proves nothing. Let us compare him with a prince in almost everything his inferior, but in whom we see a similar unbending devotion to a cause conscientiously taken up. Whatever we think of Charles the First in his days of power, his violations of law, his breaches of solemn contracts, it is impossible not to respect the thorough conviction of right which bears him up through the more honourable days of his adversity. When he writes to Rupert that to a soldier or statesmen his cause must seem hopeless, but that, looking on it as a Christian, he knows that God will not suffer rebels to prosper nor his cause to be overthrown, it is impossible not to feel that, despot as he was, he was something very different from the vulgar run of despots. And if we feel this respect for Charles, much more may we feel it for Frederick, whose character rises far above that of Charles in those points where Charles, even from a royalist point of view, decidedly fails. Charles, notwithstanding his real devotion to a cause, exhibits a strange mixture of irresolution and obstinacy. Frederick was rationally firm; he was unyielding as long as there was a reasonable hope of winning his

ends, but his firmness never degenerated into blind obstinacy. Again, Charles was one whom no man could really trust; Frederick was, above all princes of the twelfth century, a man of his word.

We have claimed honour for Frederick on the ground of his zealous and unbending devotion to a cause which he honestly adopted as the cause of right. This however is a doctrine which must not be pressed too far. It is impossible to doubt that Philip the Second was zealously and conscientiously devoted to the cause of the Church and the monarchy. The question in all such cases is, By what means is the end sought for? We do not blame Philip merely for coercing those whom he looked upon as rebels and heretics; to expect him to do otherwise would be simply to expect him to be gifted with a discernment given in its fulness to no European of that age save his Batavian rival. What we do blame him for is the baseness, perfidy, and wanton cruelty, of the means by which he sought to compass his end. In Frederick Barbarossa we find nothing of the kind. According to the standard of his own age, Frederick certainly appears chargeable with neither cruelty nor perfidy. We must remember what that age was, though we really think that the twelfth century need not shrink from a comparison with many later ages. War was in the twelfth century undertaken on very light grounds, and it was carried on with very great cruelty. But it certainly was not undertaken on lighter grounds, or carried on with greater cruelty, than it was in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. The horrors of Burgundian and Armagnac warfare, of the Italian wars of the age of the Renaissance, of the Spanish rule in the Netherlands, of the Thirty Years' War, equal anything in the very darkest times, and they certainly far exceed anything that can be laid to the charge of Frederick the First. Frederick had no guilt upon his soul like the sack of Rome or the sack of Magdeburg; he never, like Charles the Bold,* rode

* Barante, Ducs de Bourgogne, vol. x. p. 6.

with delight through a town heaped with corpses, congratulating himself on his "good butchers." He did not drown his captives like Philip Augustus, starve them to death like John of England, or flay them alive like his own accomplished grandson.* Charles the Great beheaded four thousand Saxons in cold blood; Richard Cœur-de-Lion massacred his Saracen prisoners wholesale; the Black Prince looked on unmoved from his sick litter while men, women, and children were murdered in the streets of Limoges. No such scenes marked the entry of the triumphant Cæsar into vanquished Milan or Tortona. Stern, even cruel, as he seems to us, yet, when we compare Frederick with his predecessors, contemporaries, and successors, we see that there is a meaning even in the *clementissimus* and *dulcissimus* of Otto Morena. As long as opposition lasted, Frederick did not shrink from carrying out to the utmost the cruel laws of war † of that stern age. He did not scruple to cut off the hands of those who tried to bring in provisions to a beleaguered town. He tied his hostages to his engines, that they might perish by the darts of their friends, or rather that their danger might move their friends to submission. When submission came, the injured majesty of Augustus required hard conditions of peace; but, such as they were, they were always honourably kept, and they at least never involved hurt to life or limb. It was a hard sentence for the inhabitants of a whole city to march forth with their lives alone, or with so much of their worldly goods as they could carry on their shoulders ;‡ but such a doom was mercy compared with the lot of those who fell into the jaws of Charles of Burgundy, of Alva, or of Tilly. Milan was levelled with the ground, doubtless as a high symbolic act of justice, a warning against all who should resist the might of the lord of Germany and of Rome. But the vengeance of Frederick

* "Quoscunque in castellis suis ex adversariis cepit, aut vivos excoriavit aut patibulo suspendit." Rog. Wend., iv. 209, ed. Coxe.

† "Utar ergo deinceps belli legibus." Rad. Fris., iv. 50.

‡ Otto Fris., ii. 20; Rad., iv. 56; Otto Morena, col. 981.

was exercised wholly upon dead walls; it was another matter when restored Milan fell, three centuries and a half later, into the hands of a Cæsar of a more civilized, at all events of a more polished, time. No doubt the wars and sieges of Frederick caused much human misery; vast, and doubtless not very well disciplined, armies, living at free quarters,* must have been a constant scourge to the country: but all this is common to Frederick with countless other warlike princes; what is specially his own is his constant moderation in victory. This alone would show that his wars were not wars of passion or caprice, but were waged in a cause which to him seemed a high and holy one. And again, in an age not so much of deliberate bad faith as of utter recklessness as to promises, an age when oaths were lightly taken and lightly broken, Frederick's all but invariable adherence to his word stands out conspicuously and honourably. Once, and only once, he failed. He stooped to attack Alessandria during a time of truce,† and he was deservedly driven back and obliged to raise the siege. This is a deep stain upon Frederick's otherwise straightforward and upright character. It is utterly unlike any other of his recorded actions. We may therefore at least believe that it was not a case of premeditated perfidy; we may trust that he concluded the truce in perfect good faith, but that he was afterwards tempted into a breach of faith by the sight of a favourable opportunity for attack before the days of truce were expired.

But, after all, the most truly honourable scene in the life of this great Emperor is that which followed his final defeat. After the Battle of Legnano in 1176, it was plain that he had no longer any hope of conquering the Lombard cities. He sought for peace: the negotiations were slow, but at last the Peace of Constance was agreed upon, and

* The panegyrist of Acerbus Morena (col. 1153) mentions it as his special and wonderful merit, that he abstained from plunder himself, and did all he could to hinder it in others.

† Vit. Alex. III., ap. Muratori, t. iii. p. 464.

became a law of the Empire. By this document the Imperial rights over the commonwealths were confined within certain moderate bounds. To Frederick's eternal honour, when he had given his people a constitution, he kept it. He did not act like German and Italian kings ten years ago.* After the treaty was once concluded, Frederick honestly threw himself into the altered state of things. He did not even sullenly withdraw himself from Italy altogether. In that very Milan whose citizens had broken his power, the city whose very existence showed how vain had been the schemes of his life, the King of Italy came and dwelt as an honoured guest, and, with perhaps too much regard for his new allies, he allowed the banner of the Empire to be displayed in local warfare against the enemies of Milan. Doubtless it was now Frederick's policy to preserve the peace of Italy, as his great object now was to obtain the Sicilian kingdom for his son.† Still there have been few monarchs who could have so thoroughly adapted themselves to their altered fate, or who would have so scrupulously adhered to their faith when it was once plighted. We know few things in history more touching, more honourable to all concerned, than the last years of the Italian reign of Frederick. At last the hero went forth in his later years, as he had gone in his youth, on a yet higher errand than to maintain the rights of the Roman Empire. The temporal chief of Christendom, the highest and the worthiest of Western kings, went forth once more to do battle for the sepulchre of Christ. We may be sure that no man ever put the cross upon his shoulder with a higher and a purer heart. Well had it been if he had reached the goal of his pilgrimage, and had given the crusading host a worthy leader.

* [1860.]

† It must be remembered that the kingdom of Sicily and duchy of Apulia did not—*de facto*, at least—form any part of the kingdom of Italy, though the Emperors seem always, naturally enough, to have looked on the Norman kings as interlopers.

But he died before he could again reach the Syrian border, bequeathing the destinies of Germany, Italy, and Sicily to the hands of his unworthy son, and leaving the championship of Christendom against the Moslem to the faithless Philip of Paris and the brutal Richard of Poitou.

The more private and personal character of Frederick comes to us only in the language of panegyric. We have his portrait as drawn both by a German and by an Italian admirer.* After making all needful deductions, it is easy to see in him a high and pleasing type of the pure Teutonic character. He was a man of moderate stature, bright open countenance, fair skin, yellow hair,† and, as his nickname ‡ implies, reddish beard. He was a kind friend and a placable enemy; he loved war but only as a means to peace; so at least the canon of Freising assures us.§ He was bountiful in almsgiving, and attentive to his religious duties. As to his domestic life, we know that his first wife Adelaide was divorced; the fact is recorded, but we are told little of the circumstances.‖ His second wife Beatrice is described by his panegyrists as equally admirable with her husband.¶ The amount of his literary accomplishments seems doubtful. One passage in Radevic might almost imply that he could not read;** but it may merely

* Rad. Fris., iv. 80. Otto Morena, col. 1115.

† "Flava cæsaries, paullulum a vertice frontis crispata. Aures vix superjacentibus crinibus operiuntur; tonsore, *pro reverentia Imperii*, pilos capitis et genarum assidua succisione curtante." Rad., loc. cit.

‡ We have not come across the familiar name Barbarossa in the contemporary writers. Probably, like many other royal nicknames, it was in popular use during the owner's lifetime, but did not find its way into written history till later.

§ "Bellorum amator, sed ut per ea pax acquiratur." Rad., loc. cit.

‖ Otto of Saint Blaise (Mur., vi. 869) says it was "causa fornicationis;" Otto of Freising says, "ob vincula consanguinitatis." In this Muratori (ad Otto Mor., col. 1033) sees a contradiction, which we do not. Adultery was no legal ground of divorce; but a husband's eyes would become very much more sharp-sighted to the consanguinity of a faithless wife. Muratori also argues that a certain Dietho of Ravensburg, who married her, would not have married a divorced adulteress. Yet Henry the Second of England did.

¶ Acerbus Morena, col. 1117.

** "Qui literas non nôsset." Read Fris., iv. 6. By the way, Acerbus

mean that he was not an accomplished scholar like his grandson. The same writer tells us of his study of the Scriptures and of ancient histories, which of course may merely mean that they were read to him, but it is more naturally understood of his reading them himself. Radevic speaks of him also as eloquent in his own tongue, and as having reached the same measure of Latin learning which Charles the Great reached in Greek. He understood the Latin tongue when spoken; he could not speak it fluently himself. Altogether, we do not see in Frederick Barbarossa one of those mighty original geniuses who change the world's destiny, like Alexander or Charles, or who vainly struggle against the age in which they are cast, like Hannibal or Frederick the Second. He is a man of his own age: he adopts the feelings and opinions of his own age without inquiry; he throws himself, without hesitation, into all the traditions and prejudices of his own position; in short, he never rises above the received policy and morality of his own day, but he carries out that policy and morality in its best and most honourable form. It is not needful to compare him either with the superhuman virtue of Saint Lewis or with the superhuman wickedness of John Lackland; compare him with his great contemporary, our own Angevin master, Henry. Henry was evidently a man of far greater original genius, of a far more creative mind, than Frederick was; but he utterly lacks Frederick's honest good faith and steady adherence to what, in his eyes, was the path of duty. In Henry too there was an element of brutality, a trace of the dæmon line from which he was said to spring, of which we see nothing in Frederick in his sternest moods. A far nearer likeness, much as either party would have been amazed at it, may be seen between the Swabian Cæsar and the great contemporary English churchman. Frederick of Hohenstaufen and Thomas of Canterbury were alike men

Morena (col. 1102) *dictated* his history. Could not a judge ("curiæ imperialis judex," col. 1153) write?

of high and noble character, devoting themselves to objects which, in the judgement of their own time, were righteous. We can have no sympathy either with the exemption of the clergy from temporal jurisdiction or with the subjugation of Italy by a German monarch. We can rejoice that both Frederick and Thomas failed in the long run, but we can honour the men themselves all the same. Frederick had the great advantage of finding himself in a position which allowed all his qualities their free, full, and natural developement. The lot of Thomas constrained him to a course, sincere indeed, but still unnatural and artificial. Frederick would have made but a strange saint and martyr; but had Thomas been born of Frederick's princely ancestry, he might have shone on the Imperial throne with a glory equal to that of Frederick himself.

How far the reign of Frederick worked in the long run for the good or for the ill of Italy may well be doubted. A long and at last victorious struggle against such an adversary of course raised the spirit and confidence of the republics, and thus contributed to the freedom and glory of the great age of mediæval Italy. But the very same cause doubtless made Italian unity further off than ever. To be a citizen of Milan or Crema or Tortona was to bear so glorious a name that men cared not to sink it in the vaguer and less glorious name of Italians. The war with Frederick gave Italy, as Sismondi says, the opportunity, which she failed to grasp, of forming herself into a powerful and permanent confederation. Achaia, Switzerland, Holland, and America, formed themselves under similar circumstances into great and lasting Federal republics; the Lombard cities had no thought of any union closer than that of strict offensive and defensive alliance. Doubtless the constitutional theory, admitted by Guelf no less than Ghibeline, that the republics were municipalities holding of the King of Italy must have stood in the way of any closer union. The same cause may have hindered even Switzerland from assuming the perfect federal form

till our own day. The kingdom died out, and the cities remained, not cantons of a strong Italian league, but sovereign states, weak against any powerful foreign invader. In the next century Italy had another chance of union in quite another form. The process which we see going on under our own eyes might have happened from the opposite quarter, and Italy might have formed a great and united monarchy under the sceptre of the Sicilian Manfred. Such a fate would have shorn Florence and Genoa and Venice of some brilliant centuries; but it would have saved Milan from the rule of the Visconti and Rome from the rule of Borgia, and it might have saved the whole peninsula from the yoke of Spaniard, Austrian, and Frenchman.

To return, in conclusion, to the position from which we started: what conceivable analogy is there between a King of Italy and Emperor of the Romans, reigning by acknowledged legal right, in whose election Italian barons had at least a formal share, and who received the crown of Rome from Rome's own Pontiff, a king whose right no Italian denied, and in whose cause many Italians zealously fought, and the lord of a strange disunited collection of kingdoms, who unhappily possesses a corner of Italian soil, and who till lately exercised an illegitimate influence over Italy in general? It is hard to see why the Archduke of Austria calls himself Emperor, without election or coronation; it is hard to see what is meant by an "Emperor of Austria" any more than by an Emperor of Reuss-Schleiz; it is hard to see how a prince the greater part of whose dominions lie out of Germany can give himself out as the representative of the old German kings; but it is harder still to see the likeness between the foreign prince who does not even claim the Italian kingdom, who by mere brute violence holds an Italian province without a single Italian partizan, and the *dulcissimus Imperator* who commanded the loyal devotion of Pavia and Lodi and Cremona. One of the very strangest notions is that "Austria" is an ancient,

venerable, conservative power. History pronounces it to be modern, upstart, and revolutionary, a power which has risen to a guilty greatness by trampling on every historic right and every national memory. The so-called "Empire" of Austria—a lover of old German history almost shrinks from writing the hateful title—is a mere creation of yesterday, a mere collection of plunder from various quarters. Hungary and Bohemia were once elective kingdoms; Galicia was rent from unhappy Poland by the basest of treachery and ingratitude; Venice and Ragusa were independent commonwealths within the memory of man; the liberties of Cracow have been trampled to the earth before our own eyes. What has such a power as this in common with the old days of great and united Germany? What is its "Imperial" master but a mere impostor, a bastard Cæsar, a profane mockery of the glories of Charles and Otto and Henry and Frederick? German as well as Italian patriotism ought to shrink from the miserable sham. If the Imperial title—now become the prize of perjury and massacre—has not sunk too low to be borne by the chief of a free people, the true Cæsar Augustus will be he whom we trust soon to see enthroned in the old capital of Italy and the world. And if the chosen king of liberated Italy can recover either the iron crown of Monza or the golden crown of Rome, not the least ennobling association of these venerable relics will be that they have pressed the noble brow of King Frederick of Hohenstaufen.*

* [How all that called forth my protest of ten years back has utterly changed every reader can see for himself. The cession of two or three small districts is all that is needed to make the Italian kingdom complete. The King of Hungary—to give him his highest lawful title—has now a noble future before him, Let his small Italian possessions revert to Italy; let Austria and his other German possessions revert to their natural position as parts of the new German Empire, and let Hungary stand forth as the centre and head of the scattered and distracted nations of Eastern Christendom. The Hungarian king is their natural champion alike against their Turkish tyrant and their insidious Russian deliverer. Union with a kingdom which already contains so many inhabitants of their own speech would be a far better fate for the troubled Roman provinces than incorporation with either

Russia or Turkey, or than an independence for which they are clearly unfit. Races, creeds, tongues, are so mingled together in those regions that a strictly national state of any size cannot be formed. But Magyars, Slaves, Roumans, Bulgarians, even Transsilvanian Saxons, so far cut off from the Teutonic body, might all find their places in a great federal union of the Lower Danube. Buda was once the seat of a Turkish Pasha no less than Belgrade. Hungary, freed from foreign foes, and having changed her tyrant into her king, is marked out as the state charged with the mission of restoring freedom and civilization among all the neighbouring lands.] [1871.]

X.

THE EMPEROR FREDERICK THE SECOND.

1. *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi*, etc. Collegit, etc. J. L. A. HUILLARD-BRÉHOLLES, auspiciis et sumptibus H. DE ALBERTIS DE LUYNES. Préface et Introduction. Paris: H. Plon, 1859.
2. *History of Frederick the Second, Emperor of the Romans.* By T. L. KINGTON [OLIPHANT], M.A. Cambridge and London: Macmillan, 1862.
3. *Vie et Correspondance de Pierre de la Vigne, Ministre de l'Empereur Frédéric II., etc.* Par A. HUILLARD-BRÉHOLLES. Paris: H. Plon, 1866.

Stupor mundi Fredericus—Frederick the Wonder of the World—is the name by which the English historian Matthew Paris more than once speaks of the Emperor who drew on him the eyes of all men during the greater part of the former half of the thirteenth century, and whose name has ever since lived in history as that of the most wonderful man in a most wonderful age. We do not say the greatest, still less the best, man of his time, but, as Matthew Paris calls him, the most wonderful man; the man whose character and actions shone out most distinctively, the man whose personality was most marked; the man, in short, who was in all things the most unlike to all the other men who were about him. It is probable that there never lived a human being endowed with greater natural gifts, or whose natural gifts were, according to the means afforded him by his age, more sedulously cultivated, than the last Emperor

of the house of Swabia. There seems to be no aspect of human nature which was not developed to the highest degree in his person. In versatility of gifts, in what we may call manysidedness of character, he appears as a sort of mediæval Alkibiadês, while he was undoubtedly far removed from Alkibiadês' utter lack of principle or steadiness of any kind. Warrior, statesman, lawgiver, scholar, there was nothing in the compass of the political or intellectual world of his age which he failed to grasp. In an age of change, when, in every corner of Europe and civilized Asia, old kingdoms, nations, systems, were falling and new ones rising, Frederick was emphatically the man of change, the author of things new and unheard of—he was *stupor mundi et immutator mirabilis.* A suspected heretic, a suspected Mahometan, he was the object of all kinds of absurd and self-contradictory charges; but the charges mark real features in the character of the man. He was something unlike any other Emperor or any other man; whatever professions of orthodoxy he might make, men felt instinctively that his belief and his practice were not the same as the belief and the practice of other Christian men. There can be no doubt that he had wholly freed his mind from the trammels of his own time, and that he had theories and designs which, to most of his contemporaries, would have seemed monstrous, unintelligible, impossible. Frederick in short was, in some obvious respects, a man of the same stamp as those who influence their own age and the ages which come after them, the men who, if their lot is cast in one walk, found sects, and if it is cast in another, found empires. Of all men, Frederick the Second might have been expected to be the founder of something, the beginner of some new æra, political or intellectual. He was a man to whom some great institution might well have looked back as its creator, to whom some large body of men, some sect or party or nation, might well have looked back as their prophet or founder or deliverer. But the most gifted of the sons of men has left behind him no such memory, while men whose gifts cannot

bear a comparison with his are reverenced as founders by grateful nations, churches, political and philosophical parties. Frederick in fact founded nothing, and he sowed the seeds of the destruction of many things. His great charters to the spiritual and temporal princes of Germany dealt the death-blow to the Imperial power, while he, to say the least, looked coldly on the rising power of the cities and on those commercial leagues which were in his time the best element of German political life. In fact, in whatever aspect we look at Frederick the Second, we find him, not the first, but the last, of every series to which he belongs. An English writer, two hundred years after his time, had the penetration to see that he was really the last Emperor.* He was the last prince in whose style the Imperial titles do not seem a mockery; he was the last under whose rule the three Imperial kingdoms retained any practical connexion with one another and with the ancient capital of all. Frederick, who sent his trophies to Rome to be guarded by his own subjects in his own city, was a Roman Cæsar in a sense in which no other Emperor was after him. And he was not only the last Emperor of the whole Empire; he might almost be called the last king of its several kingdoms. After his time Burgundy vanishes as a kingdom; there is hardly an event to remind us of its existence except the fancy of Charles the Fourth, of all possible Emperors, to go and take the Burgundian crown at Arles. Italy too, after Frederick, vanishes as a kingdom; any later exercise of the royal authority in Italy was something which came and went wholly by fits and starts. Later Emperors were crowned at Milan, but none after Frederick was King of Italy in the same real and effective sense that he was. Germany did not utterly vanish, or utterly split in pieces, like the sister kingdoms; but after Frederick came the Great Interregnum, and after the Great Interregnum the

* Capgrave, in his Chronicle, dates by Emperors down to Frederick, and then adds: "Fro this tyme forward oure annotacion schal be aftir the regne of the Kyngis of Ynglond; *for the Empire, in maner, sesed here.*"

royal power in Germany never was what it had been before. In his hereditary kingdom of Sicily he was not absolutely the last of his dynasty, for his son Manfred ruled prosperously and gloriously for some years after his death. But it is none the less clear that from Frederick's time the Sicilian kingdom was doomed; it was marked out to be, what it has been ever since, divided, reunited, divided again, tossed to and fro between one foreign sovereign and another. Still more conspicuously than all was Frederick the last Christian King of Jerusalem, the last baptized man who really ruled the Holy Land or wore a crown in the Holy City. And yet, strangely enough, it was at Jerusalem, if anywhere, that Frederick might claim in some measure the honours of a founder. If he was the last more than nominal King of Jerusalem, he was also, after a considerable interval, the first; he recovered the kingdom by his own address, and, if he lost it, its loss was, of all the misfortunes of his reign, that which could be with the least justice attributed to him as a fault. In the world of elegant letters Frederick has some claim to be looked on as the founder of that modern Italian language and literature which first assumed a distinctive shape at his Sicilian court. But in the wider field of political history Frederick appears nowhere as a creator, but rather everywhere as an involuntary destroyer. He is in everything the last of his own class, and he is not the last in the same sense as princes who perish along with their realms in domestic revolutions or on the field of battle. If we call him the last Emperor of the West, it is in quite another sense from that in which Constantine Palaiologos was the last Emperor of the East. Under Frederick the Empire and everything connected with it seems to crumble and decay while preserving its external splendour. As soon as its brilliant possessor is gone, it at once falls asunder. It is a significant fact that one who in mere genius, in mere accomplishments, was surely the greatest prince who ever wore a crown, a prince who held the greatest place on earth, and who was concerned during

a long reign in some of the greatest transactions of one of the greatest ages, seems never, even from his own flatterers, to have received that title of *Great* which has been so lavishly bestowed on far smaller men. The world instinctively felt that Frederick, by nature the more than peer of Alexander, of Constantine, and of Charles, had left behind him no such creation as they left, and had not influenced the world as they had influenced it. He was *stupor mundi et immutator mirabilis*, but the name of *Fridericus Magnus* was kept in store for a prince of quite another age and house, who, whatever else we say of him, at least showed that he had learned the art of Themistoklês, and knew how to change a small state into a great one.

Many causes combined to produce this singular result, that a man of the extraordinary genius of Frederick, a man possessed of every advantage of birth, office, and opportunity, should have had so little direct effect upon the world. It is not enough to attribute his failure to the many and great faults of his moral character. Doubtless they were one cause among others. But a man who influences future ages is not necessarily a good man. No man ever had a more direct influence on the future history of the world than Lucius Cornelius Sulla. The man who crushed Rome's last rival, who saved Rome in her last hour of peril, who made her indisputably and for ever the head of Italy, did a work greater than the work of Cæsar. Yet the name of Sulla is one at which we almost instinctively shudder. So the faults and crimes of Frederick, his irreligion, his private licentiousness, his barbarous cruelty, would not of themselves be enough to hinder him from leaving his stamp upon his age in the way that other ages have been marked by the influence of men certainly not worse than he. Still, to exercise any great and lasting influence on the world, a man must be, if not virtuous, at least capable of objects and efforts which have something in common with virtue. Sulla stuck at no crime which could serve his country or his party, but it was for his country and his party, not for

purely selfish ends, that he laboured and that he sinned. Thorough devotion to any cause has in it something of self-sacrifice, something which, if not purely virtuous, is not without an element akin to virtue. Very bad men have achieved very great works, but they have commonly achieved them through those features in their character which made the nearest approach to goodness. The weak side in the brilliant career of Frederick is one which seems to have been partly inherent in his character, and partly the result of the circumstances in which he found himself. Capable of every part, and in fact playing every part by turns, he had no single definite object, pursued honestly and steadfastly throughout his whole life. With all his powers, with all his brilliancy, his course throughout life seems to have been in a manner determined for him by others. He was ever drifting into wars, into schemes of policy, which seem to be hardly ever of his own choosing. He was the mightiest and most dangerous adversary that the Papacy ever had. But he does not seem to have withstood the Papacy from any personal choice, or as the voluntary champion of any opposing principle. He became the enemy of the Papacy, he planned schemes which involved the utter overthrow of the Papacy, yet he did so simply because he found that no Pope would ever let him alone. It was perhaps an unerring instinct which hindered any Pope from ever letting him alone. Frederick, left alone to act according to his own schemes and inclinations, might very likely have done the Papacy more real mischief than he did when he was stirred up to open enmity. Still, as a matter of fact, his quarrels with the Popes were not of his own seeking; a sort of inevitable destiny led him into them, whether he wished for them or not. Again, the most really successful feature in Frederick's career, his acquisition of Jerusalem, is not only a mere episode in his life, but it is something that was absolutely forced upon him against his will. The most successful of crusaders since Godfrey is the most utterly unlike any other crusader. With other

crusaders the Holy War was, in some cases the main business of their lives; in all cases it was something seriously undertaken as a matter either of policy or of religious duty. But the crusade of the man who actually did recover the Holy City is simply a grotesque episode in his life. Excommunicated for not going, excommunicated again for going, excommunicated again for coming back, threatened on every side, he still went, and he succeeded. What others had failed to win by arms, he contrived to win by address, and all that came of his success was that it was made the ground of fresh accusations against him. For years the cry for the recovery of Jerusalem had been sounding through Christendom; at last Jerusalem was recovered, and its recoverer was at once cursed for accomplishing the most fervent wishes of so many thousands of the faithful. The excommunicated king, whom no churchman would crown, whose name was hardly allowed to be uttered in his own army, kept his dominions in spite of all opposition. He was hindered from the further consolidation and extension of his Eastern kingdom only by a storm stirred up in his hereditary states by those who were most bound to show towards him something more than common international honesty. Whatever were the feelings and circumstances under which he had acted, Frederick was in fact the triumphant champion of Christendom, and his reward was fresh denunciations on the part of the spiritual chief of Christendom. The elder Frederick, Philip of France, Richard of England, Saint Lewis, Edward the First, were crusaders from piety, from policy, or from fashion; Frederick the Second was a crusader simply because he could not help being one, and yet he did what they all failed to do. So again in his dealings with both the German and the Italian states, it is impossible to set him down either as a consistent friend or a consistent enemy of the great political movements of the age. He issues charters of privileges to this or that commonwealth, he issues charters restraining the freedom of commonwealths in general, simply as suits

the policy of the time. In his dealings with the Popes, perhaps in his dealings with the cities also, Frederick was certainly more sinned against than sinning. But a man whose genius and brilliancy and vigour shine out in every single action of his life, but in the general course of his actions no one ruling principle can be discerned, who is as it were tossed to and fro by circumstances and by the actions of others, is either very unfortunate in the position in which he finds himself, or else, with all his genius, he must lack some of the qualities without which genius is comparatively useless.

In the case of Frederick probably both causes were true. For a man to influence his age, he must in some sort belong to his age. He should be above it, before it, but he should not be foreign to it. He may condemn, he may try to change, the opinions and feelings of the men around him; but he must at least understand and enter into those opinions and feelings. But Frederick belongs to no age; intellectually he is above his own age, above every age; morally it can hardly be denied that he was below his age; but in nothing was he of his age. In many incidental details his career is a repetition of that of his grandfather. Like him he struggles against Popes, he struggles against a league of cities, he wears the Cross in warfare against the Infidel. But in character, in aim, in object, grandfather and grandson are the exact opposite to each other. Frederick Barbarossa was simply the model of the man, the German, the Emperor, of the twelfth century. All the faults and all the virtues of his age, his country, and his position received in him their fullest developement. He was the ordinary man of his time, following the objects which an ordinary man of his time and in his position could not fail to follow. He exhibited the ordinary character of his time in its very noblest shape; but it was still only the ordinary character of his time. His whole career was simply typical of his age, and in no way personal to himself; every action and every event of his

life could be understood by every contemporary human being, friend or enemy. But his grandson, emphatically *stupor mundi*, commanded the wonder, perhaps the admiration, of an age which could not understand him. He gathered indeed around him a small band of devoted adherents; but to the mass of his contemporaries he seemed like a being of another nature. He shared none of the feelings or prejudices of the time; alike in his intellectual greatness and in his moral abasement he had nothing in common with the ordinary man of the thirteenth century. The world probably contained no man, unless it were some solitary thinker here and there, whose mind was so completely set free, alike for good and for evil, from the ordinary trammels of the time. He appeared in the eyes of his own age as the enemy of all that it was taught to hold sacred, the friend of all that it was taught to shrink from and wage war against. What Frederick's religious views really were is a problem hard indeed to solve; but to his own time he appeared as something far more than a merely political, or even than a doctrinal, opponent of the Papacy. Men were taught to believe that he was the enemy of the head of Christendom simply because he was the enemy of Christianity altogether. Again, the crimes and vices of Frederick were no greater than those of countless other princes; but there was no prince who trampled in the like sort upon all the moral notions of his own time. He contrived, by the circumstances of his vices, to outrage contemporary sentiment in a way in which his vices alone would not have outraged it. A man who thus showed no condescension to the feelings of his age, whether good or evil, could not directly influence that age. Some of his ideas and schemes may have been silently passed on to men of later times, in whose hands they were better able to bear fruit. He may have shaken old prejudices and old beliefs in a few minds of his own age; he may even have been the fountain of a tradition which was powerfully to affect distant ages. In

many things his ideas, his actions, forestalled events which were yet far remote. The events which he forestalled he may in this indirect and silent way have influenced. But direct influence on the world of his own age he had none. He may have undermined a stately edifice which was still to survive for ages; but he simply undermined. He left no traces of himself in the character of a founder; he left as few in the character of an open and avowed destroyer.

There was also another cause which, besides Frederick's personal character, may have tended to isolate him from his age and to hinder him from having that influence over it which we may say that his genius ought to have had. This was his utter want of nationality. The conscious idea of nationality had not indeed the same effect upon men's minds which it has in our own times. The political ideas and systems of the age ran counter to the principle of nationality in two ways. Nothing could be more opposed to any doctrine of nationality than those ideas which were the essence of the whole political creed of the time, the ideas of the Universal Empire and the Universal Church. On the other hand, the conception of the joint lordship of the world, vested in the successor of Peter and the successor of Augustus, was hardly more opposed to the doctrine of nationality than was the form which was almost everywhere taken by the rising spirit of freedom. A movement towards national freedom was something exceptional; in most places it was the independence of a district, of a city, at most of a small union of districts or cities, for which men strove. A German or Italian commonwealth struggled for its own local independence; so far as was consistent with the practical enjoyment of that independence, it was ready to acknowledge the supremacy of the Emperor, Lord of the World. Of a strictly national patriotism for Germany or Italy men had very little thought indeed. These two seemingly opposite tendencies, the tendency to merge nations in one universal dominion, and the tendency to

divide nations into small principalities and commonwealths, were in truth closely connected. The tendency to division comes out most strongly in the kingdoms which were united to the Empire. Other countries showed a power of strictly national action, of acquiring liberties common to the whole nation, of legislating in the interest of the whole nation, almost in exact proportion to the degree in which they were placed beyond the reach of Imperial influences. Spain, Scandinavia, Britain, were the countries on which the Empire had least influence. Spain, Scandinavia, Britain, were therefore the countries in which we see the nearest approaches to true national life and consciousness. Still there is no doubt that, even within the Empire, national feelings did exercise a strong, though in a great measure an unconscious, influence. Local feelings exercised an influence still stronger. But there was no national or local feeling which could gather round Frederick the Second. There was no national or local cause of which he could be looked on as the champion. There was no nation, no province, no city, which could claim him as its own peculiar hero. Ruling over men of various races and languages, he could adapt himself to each of them in turn in a way in which few men before or after him could do. But there was none of the various races of his dominions, German, Burgundian, Italian, Norman, Greek, or Saracen, which could claim him as really bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh. His parentage was half German, half Norman, his birthplace was Italian, the home of his choice was Sicilian, his tastes and habits were strongly suspected of being Saracenic. The representative of a kingly German house, he was himself, beyond all doubt, less German than anything else. He was Norman, Italian, almost anything rather than German; but he was far from being purely Norman or purely Italian. In this position, placed as it were above all ordinary local and national ties, he was, beyond every other prince who ever wore the Imperial diadem, the embodiment of the conception of an

Emperor, Lord of the World. But an Emperor, Lord of the World, is placed too high to win the affections which attach men to rulers and leaders of lower degree. A king may command the love of his own kingdom; a popular leader may command the love of his own city. But Cæsar, whose dominion is from the one sea to the other and from the flood unto the world's end, must, in this respect as in others, pay the penalty of his greatness. Frederick was, in idea, beyond all men, the hero and champion of the Empire. But practically the championship of the Empire was found less truly effective in his hands than in the hands of men who were further from carrying out the theoretical ideal. The Imperial power was more truly vigorous in the hands of princes in whom the ideal championship of the Empire was united with the practical leadership of one of its component nations. Frederick Barbarossa, the true German king, the man whom the German instinct at once hails as the noblest developement of the German character, really did more for the greatness of the Empire than his descendant, whose ideal position was far more truly Imperial. The men who influence their age, the men who leave a lasting memory behind them, are the men who are thoroughly identified with the actual or local life of some nation or city. Frederick Barbarossa was the hero of Germany; but his grandson, the hero of the Empire, was the hero of none of its component parts. The memory of the grandfather still lives in the hearts of a people, some of whom perhaps even now look for his personal return. The memory of the grandson has everywhere passed away from popular remembrance; the Wonder of the World remains to be the wonder of scholars and historians only.

In this last respect the memory of Frederick the Second has certainly nothing to complain of. Few princes have ever had such a monument raised to them as has been raised to the memory of the last Swabian Emperor by the munificence of the Duke of Luynes and the learning

and industry of M. Huillard-Bréholles. Here, in a series of noble quartos, are all the documents of a reign most fertile in documents, ushered in by a volume which, except in not assuming a strictly narrative form, is essentially a complete history of Frederick's reign. M. Huillard-Bréholles seems literally to have let nothing escape him. He discusses at length everything which in any way concerns his hero, from the examination of schemes which look very like the institution of a new religion down to the minutest details of form in the wording, dating, and spelling of the Emperor's official acts. We never saw a book which is more thoroughly exhaustive of the subject with which it deals. It is not a history, merely because the form of an introduction or preface seems to have laid M. Bréholles under the necessity of giving us, instead of a single regular narrative, a series of distinct narrative discussions of each of the almost countless aspects in which the reign of Frederick can be looked at. M. Bréholles has also followed up his great work by a monograph of the life and aims of one whose history is inseparably bound together with that of Frederick, his great and unfortunate minister, Peter de Vinea. In this he examines at full length a subject to which we shall again return, and which is perhaps the most interesting of all which the history of Frederick presents, namely, the relation of the freethinking and reforming Emperor to the received religion of this age. On this point we cannot unreservedly pledge ourselves to all the details of M. Bréholles' conclusions; but they are at least highly ingenious, and the contemporary evidence on which he grounds them is most singular and interesting, and deserves most attentive study. Altogether we can have no hesitation in placing M. Bréholles' investigation of the reign of Frederick the Second among the most important contributions which our age has made to historical learning.

Nor has the character and history of Frederick failed to

attract notice among scholars in our own country. His career supplies materials for one of the most brilliant parts of Dean Milman's History of Latin Christianity; there is no part of his great work which is more palpably a labour of love. More recently has appeared the history of Frederick by Mr. Kington-Oliphant, the production of a young writer, and which shows want of due preparation in some of the introductory portions, but which also shows real research and real vigour as the author approaches his main subject, the life of Frederick himself. Mr. Oliphant is confessedly a disciple of M. Bréholles, and his volumes, as supplying that direct and continuous narrative which M. Bréholles' plan did not allow of, may be taken as a companion-piece to the great work of his master.*

The reign of Frederick, like that of his predecessor Henry the Fourth, was nearly co-extensive with his life. His history began while he was in his cradle. Like Henry the Fourth, after filling the first place in men's minds for a long series of years, he died at no very advanced time of life. Frederick, born in 1194, died in 1250, at the age of fifty-six. Henry at the time of his death was a year younger. Yet it marks a difference between the two men that historians seem involuntarily, in defiance of chronology, to think and speak of Henry in his later years as quite an aged man. No one ever speaks in this way of Frederick. The Wonder of the World seems endowed with a kind of undying youth, and after all the great events and revolutions of his reign, we are at last surprised to find that we have passed over so many years as we really have. Frederick was a king almost from his birth. The son of the Emperor Henry the Sixth and of Constance the heiress of Sicily, he was born while his father was in his full career of success and cruelty. His very birth gave occasion to mythical tales. The comparatively advanced age of his mother, which however has been greatly

* [Mr. Oliphant is now better known for researches into the history of the English language.] [1886.]

exaggerated, gave occasion to rumours of opposite kinds. His enemies gave out that he was not really of Imperial birth, and that the childless Empress had palmed off a supposititious child on her husband. His admirers hailed his birth as wonderful, if not miraculous, and placed the conception of Constance alongside of the conceptions of the mothers of Isaac, of Samuel, and of John the Baptist. Elected King of the Romans in his infancy, his father's death left him in his third year his successor in the Sicilian kingdom, and his mother's death in the next year left an orphan boy as the heir alike of the Hohenstaufen Emperors and of the Norman kings. His election as King of the Romans seems to have been utterly forgotten; after the death of his father, the crown was disputed by the double election of Otto of Saxony and of Frederick's own uncle Philip. The child in Sicily was not thought of till Philip had been murdered just when fortune seemed to have finally decided for him; till Otto, reaping the advantage of a crime of which he was guiltless, had been enabled to secure both the kingdom and the Empire, and till he had fallen into disgrace with the Pontiff by whose favour he had at first been supported. Meanwhile the Sicilian kingdom was torn by rebellions and laid waste by mercenary captains. The land had at last been restored to some measure of peace, and the young king to some measure of authority, by the intervention of the overlord Pope Innocent. Frederick was a husband at fifteen, a father at eighteen, and almost at the same moment as the birth of his first son, Henry the future king and rebel, he was called to the German crown by the party which was discontented with Otto, now under the ban of the Church. Frederick, destined to be the bitterest enemy of the Roman see, made his first appearance on German soil as its special nursling, called to royalty and Empire under the auspices of the greatest of the Roman Pontiffs. He came thither also, there seems little reason to doubt, under patronage of a less honour-

able kind. The long disputes between England and France had already begun, and, by a strange anticipation of far later times, they had already begun to be carried on within the boundaries of the Empire. Otto, the son of an English mother, was supported by the money and the arms of his uncle John of England, while the heir of the Hohenstaufen partly owed his advancement to the influence and the gold of Philip of France. In 1211 Frederick was elected King; three years later, Otto, in Mr. Oliphant's words, "rushed on his doom." At Bouvines, a name hardly to be written without an unpleasant feeling by any man of Teutonic blood and speech, the King of the French overthrew the Saxon Emperor and his English and Flemish allies. The power of Otto, already crumbling away, was now utterly broken. In 1215, while John was quailing before his triumphant barons, Frederick, the rival of his nephew, received the royal crown and assumed the cross. Three years later, the death of Otto removed all traces of opposition to his claims, an event which, by a singular coincidence, was nearly contemporaneous with the birth of one destined to be himself, not only a king, but the beginner of a new stage in the history of the Empire, the famous Rudolf of Habsburg. In 1220 Frederick's son Henry, then only eight years old, was elected King, although his father was not yet crowned Emperor. But in the course of the same year Frederick received the Imperial diadem at the hands of Pope Honorius. His coronation was an event deserving of special record in the Roman annals, as one of the very few times when an Emperor received his crown without bloodshed or disturbance, amid the loyal acclamations of the Roman people. Possibly some conscious or unconscious feeling of national kindred spoke in favour of an Emperor born within the borders of Italy, and under whose rule it might seem that Germany and not Italy was likely to be the secondary and dependent realm. In truth, in that same year, before leaving

his Northern kingdom, Frederick had, seemingly as the price of the election of his son, put the seal to the destruction of the royal power in Germany. The charter which he granted in that year to the German princes is one of the marked stages of the long process which changed the kingdom of Charles and Otto and Henry into the lax Confederation which has so lately fallen in pieces before our eyes.*

Frederick was still, to all appearance, a dutiful son of the Church; but there were already signs that a storm was brewing. The union between a Pope and a Hohenstaufen Emperor was something which in its own nature could not be lasting. The magnificent theory which looked on the spiritual and temporal chiefs of Rome as the coequal rulers of the Church and the world always gave way at the slightest strain. Even before his Imperial coronation, Frederick had fallen under the displeasure of Honorius; he had received rebukes and had had to make excuses. As usual, the two swords were always clashing; the King of Sicily was charged with meddling with ecclesiastical fiefs and with the freedom of ecclesiastical elections. But the great point was the Crusade. Frederick had become a crusader at the time of his assumption of the German crown; but no crusade had he as yet waged. Damietta had been won, and Damietta was soon after lost again, without the temporal head of Christendom striking a blow to win or to defend it. The position thus lightly dealt with was held to be the very key of the Holy Land. In the eyes of a Pope such neglect was a wicked forsaking of the first of duties. It might perhaps have appeared in the same light in the eyes of an ideal Emperor. But the hereditary King of Sicily, the elected King of Germany, Italy, and Burgundy, found occupation enough in the lower duties of ordinary royalty. In all his kingdoms there were matters calling for his attention. In his own hereditary realm he had a work

* [December, 1866.]

to do which he might fairly plead as an excuse for not engaging in warfare beyond the sea. He had no need to go and seek for Saracen enemies in distant lands while the Saracens of his own island were in open revolt. He brought into subjection both the turbulent infidels and the no less turbulent nobles, and he made Sicily the model of a civilized and legal despotism, framed after the pattern of the best days of the Eastern Empire. The wild Saracens of the mountains were partly constrained to adopt a more peaceful life, partly transferred to a spot where, instead of restless rebels, they became the surest defence of his throne. He planted them in the city of Nocera in Apulia, where, isolated in a surrounding Christian country, they dwelt as his housecarls or janissaries, bound by the single tie of personal loyalty—soldiers who could always be trusted, for over them Popes and monks had no influence. Besides this work in his native kingdom, a work enough by itself to tax all the energies of an ordinary mortal, he had other work to do in all his Imperial realms. Not the least interesting among the notices of this part of his reign are those which concern the states along his western frontier. On the one hand France was already encroaching; on the other hand a movement was beginning which, had it prospered, might have placed an unbroken line of independent states between the great rival powers. The duty which Switzerland and Belgium, at too great an interval from one another, have still to discharge, fell, in the thirteenth century, to the lot of a whole crowd of rising commonwealths. From the mouths of the Rhine to the mouths of the Rhone, republics, worthy sisters of the republics of Italy and Northern Germany, were springing up through the whole length of ancient Lotharingia and Burgundy. It is sad to see Frederick everywhere interfering to check this new birth of freedom. Everywhere the local count or bishop was encouraged to subdue the presumptuous rebels of the cities. Take two instances from cities widely apart in

geographical position. Massalia, the old Ionian commonwealth, the city which had braved the might of Cæsar and which was before many years to brave the might of Charles of Anjou, had begun her second and shorter career of freedom. In the eyes of Frederick the citizens were mere rebels against their bishop, and the Count of Provence was bidden to bring them back to their due obedience. So, at almost the other end of the Empire, the citizens of Cambray failed to pay due submission to the Imperial commands. But here a more dangerous influence was at work. The Emperor was still on good terms with the King of the French; he had lately concluded a treaty with him; binding himself, among other things, to enter into no alliance with England. But the instinctive tendencies of the Parisian monarchy were then, as ever, too strong for mere written engagements. France was intriguing with the citizens of Cambray, and the Emperor had to call upon King Lewis to cease from any intermeddling with his disaffected subjects.

We have brought out these points, though of no special importance in the life of Frederick, because they at once illustrate the varied relations of a mediæval Emperor to all kinds of rulers and communities, great and small, and because they specially illustrate the reality of power which the Emperor still retained both in his Burgundian kingdom and in other portions of the Empire which have since been swallowed up by the encroachments of France. Neither of our authors brings out this point as it should be brought out. M. Bréholles is far too learned to be ignorant of, far too candid to suppress, any one fact in his history. Still he is a Frenchman, and we can hardly expect him to enter a formal protest against the most popular of all French delusions. Mr. Oliphant knows his facts, but he does not fully grasp them. It is with a kind of surprise that he finds "that many provinces, now included within the boundaries of France, then looked for direction to Hagenau or Palermo, not to Paris." To

be sure Mr. Bryce's tabular view of the Ten Burgundies had not been drawn up when Mr. Oliphant wrote.

At last we reach Frederick's crusade, perhaps rather to be called his progress to the East. The marriage of Frederick with Yolande of Brienne put him into altogether a new relation to the Holy Land and all that pertained to it. His journey to Jerusalem was now, not that of a private adventurer or pilgrim, not that of an Emperor acting as the common head of Christendom, but that of a king going to take possession of one of his own kingdoms, to receive yet another crown in another of his capitals. And in truth Frederick, when he had once set out, found less difficulty in winning his way to the crown of Jerusalem than some of his predecessors in the Empire had found in winning their way to the crown of Rome. Everything seemed against him; the papal throne had a new and very different occupant; to the mild Honorius had succeeded the stern and unbending Gregory. Frederick's second Empress was already dead, and with her, it might be argued, he had lost his right to a kingdom which he could claim only through her. He himself was excommunicated at every step; if he went, if he stayed, the ban was equally launched against him for going and for staying. Yet he went: on his way he successfully established his Imperial rights over the Frank king of Cyprus, a rival claimant for the crown of Jerusalem. Without striking a blow, by dexterous diplomacy, by taking advantage of the divided and tottering state of the Mahometan powers, he gained the main object for which Christendom had striven in vain for forty years. A Christian king again reigned in the Holy City, and the sepulchre of Christ was again in the hands of His worshippers. It was a strange position when the excommunicated king, in whose presence any religious office was forbidden, placed on his own head the crown of the Holy Land in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. It might almost seem as if it was in this strange moment of trial that Frederick's faith finally gave way. The suspicion of

Mahometanism which attached to him is of course, in its literal sense, utterly absurd; but it is worthy of notice that it was not confined to Christian imaginations. The conduct of Frederick at Jerusalem impressed more than one Mahometan writer with the belief that, if the Emperor was not an actual proselyte to Islam, he was at least not sound in the faith which he outwardly professed. It must be remembered that the toleration of Mahometan worship within its walls was one of the conditions on which Frederick obtained possession of the Holy City. A stipulation like this might well arouse suspicions of his Christian orthodoxy in the minds of Christians and Mussulmans alike. In modern eyes his conduct appears simply just and reasonable; setting aside any abstract doctrine of religious toleration, the view of a modern statesman would be that Frederick preferred, and wisely preferred, instead of putting everything to the hazard of the sword, to win his main object by treaty, and to yield on some lesser points. The essence of a treaty between two powers treating on equal terms is that each should abate somewhat of that which it holds to be the full measure of its rights. Few will now condemn Frederick for choosing to accept such large concessions by treaty rather than to trust everything to the chances of war. Had he done otherwise, he might probably have had to return to Europe after wasting his forces in a struggle as bootless as those of most of the crusaders who had gone before him. And it seems that, even in his own age, a large amount of general European feeling went with him. His treatment at the hands of the Pope and the papal party was so manifestly unjust as to arouse a deep feeling in his favour in all parts of Christendom. In Italy, in Germany, in England, the chief writers of the time all side with Frederick against Gregory. Allowance was made for his position; he had done what he could; had he not laboured under an unrighteous excommunication, had he not been thwarted and betrayed by the clergy and the military orders, he would have done far more. Still the indignation of the

extreme ecclesiastical party against Frederick was, from their own point of view, neither unnatural nor unreasonable. In the eyes of some zealots any treaty with the infidels was in itself unlawful; even without going this length, a treaty which, though it secured the Holy Sepulchre to the Christian, left the "Temple of the Lord" to the Mahometan, could not fail to offend some of the most deep-seated feelings of the age. Whatever might be Frederick's own faith, he at least had not the orthodox hatred for men of another faith. Various incidental actions and expressions of the Emperor during his stay at Jerusalem impressed the Mahometans themselves with the idea that he at least put both religions pretty much on a level. We must remember that his toleration of Mahometanism would be a thing which few Mahometans would appreciate, and which would of itself raise suspicions in most oriental minds. A man who could act with justice and moderation towards men of their law would seem to them to be no real believer in the law which he himself professed. But this could not have been all: the impression of Frederick's lack of orthodoxy, and of his special tendency towards Mahometanism, was too deeply fixed in the minds of men of both creeds to have rested only on an inference of this kind. And it is perfectly credible in itself. A King of Sicily, who from his childhood had had to do with Saracens in his own kingdom both in peace and in war, who, if he had sometimes had to deal with them as enemies, had also found that they could be changed into its bravest and most loyal soldiers, could not possibly hate the unbelievers with the hatred which in the breast of a King of England or France might be a perfectly honest passion. Then, just at the moment when he was naturally stung to the heart by his ill treatment at the hands of the head of his own faith, when he was denied communion in Christian rites, when the ministers and defenders of the Christian Church shrank from him as from one worse than an infidel—just at such a moment as this, he came across a fuller and more splendid developement of

the Mahometan law among the independent Mahometan powers of the East. There was much in the aspect of Mahometan society to attract him. The absolute authority of the Mahometan sovereigns was congenial to his political notions. The art and science, such as it was, of the more civilized Mahometan nations appealed to his intellectual cravings. The license allowed by the Mahometan law fell in no less powerfully with the impulses of his voluptuous temperament. That Frederick ever, strictly speaking, became a Mahometan is of course an absurd fable. It is not even necessary to believe that he ever formally threw aside all faith in the dogmas of Christianity as understood in his own age. But that Frederick, with all his professions of orthodoxy, was at least a freethinker, that he indulged in speculations which the orthodoxy of his age condemned, it is hardly possible to doubt. That he aimed at the widest changes in the external fabric of the Christian Church, in the relations between the spiritual and the temporal, between the Papal and the Imperial, powers, there can be no doubt at all. And, if there was any one moment of change in Frederick's mind, any one moment when doubt, if not disbelief, obtained the supremacy over his mind, no moment is so likely as that in which he saw Christianity and Islam standing side by side in the Holy City of both religions, and when, as regarded himself, it could not have been Christianity which appeared in the more attractive light.

We had hoped to give a sketch, if only a short one, of the main events in Frederick's later career—his reconciliation with Gregory, his season of comparative tranquillity in his Sicilian realm, his schemes of government and legislation, his second and final rupture with Gregory, his last struggle with Innocent, his last excommunication and deposition, and the political consequences of that bold stretch of papal authority in the appearance of rival kings in Germany and the general weakening of the Imperial power throughout the Empire. But the reflexions to which we have been led

by the consideration of Frederick's position at Jerusalem lead us at once to questions which may well occupy our remaining space. On the question of Frederick's religion Mr. Oliphant hardly enlarges at all; Dean Milman sums up his own view in a few remarkable words:—

"Frederick's, in my judgment, was neither scornful and godless infidelity, nor certainly a more advanced and enlightened Christianity, yearning after holiness and purity not then attainable. It was the shattered, dubious, at times trembling faith, at times desperately reckless incredulity, of a man under the burthen of an undeserved excommunication, of which he could not but discern the injustice, but could not quite shake off the terrors; of a man whom a better age of Christianity might not have made religious; whom his own made irreligious."

But M. Bréholles, both in his general Introduction and in his special monograph of Peter de Vinea, goes very much deeper into the question. He gathers together a great number of passages from contemporary writers, which, in his judgement, are evidence that Frederick was, in the eyes of a small knot of enthusiastic admirers, looked on as something like the apostle, or rather the Messiah, of a new religion. Such a notion is certainly much less improbable in itself than, with our modern notions, it seems to us. Everything was then looked at from a religious point of view. Political partizanship took the form of religious worship; the man who died for his country or for his party was canonized as a martyr, and miracles were deemed to be wrought at his grave. The famous case of Simon of Montfort, a younger contemporary of Frederick, is perhaps the strongest of any. Simon died under a papal excommunication; but no excommunication could hinder the English people, and the mass of the English clergy among them, from looking on the martyred earl as the patron of the English nation, whose relics possessed healing virtues on earth, and whose intercession could not fail to be availing in heaven. The age of Frederick moreover was eminently an age of religious movement. The new monastic orders on the one hand, the countless heresies on the other, sprang out of the same source, and sometimes

mingled together in a strange way. The heretic who was sent to the stake and the Dominican friar who sent him thither were, each in his own way, witnesses to a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the existing state of the Church, to a general striving after something new, in dogma, in discipline, or in practice, according to the disposition of each particular reformer. Strange writings, setting forth strange doctrines, were afloat before the days of Frederick and remained afloat after his days. The whole of the inner circle of the Franciscan order, the order of personal self-sacrifice and mystic devotion, seemed fast sweeping into something more than heresy. Even the pillars of orthodoxy, the unrelenting avengers of every deviation from the narrow path, the stern, practical, relentless, Dominicans, did not escape the suspicion of being touched by the same contagion. That contagion was indeed more than heresy; it was the preaching of a new religion. To the believers in the "Everlasting Gospel" Christianity itself seemed, just as it seems to a Mahometan, to be a mere imperfect and temporary dispensation, a mere preparation for something better which was to come. The reign of the Father, with its revelation in the Mosaic Law, had passed away; the reign of the Son, with its revelation in the Christian Church, was passing away; the reign of the Holy Ghost was approaching, with its own special revelation, more perfect than all. The age was one which could hardly bear to look upon anything in a purely secular way. Even when the spiritual and temporal powers came into conflict, the conflict was of a somewhat different kind from similar conflicts in our own day. The Ghibelin doctrine was far from being a mere assertion of the superiority of a power confessedly of the earth, earthy, over a power confessedly of higher origin. The Empire had its religious devotees as well as the Popedom. In the ideas of both parties a Vicar of Christ was a necessity; the only question was whether the true Vicar of Christ was to be looked for in the Roman Pontiff or in the Roman Cæsar. To the

enthusiastic votaries of the Empire the Emperor seemed as truly a direct representative of Divinity, as literally a power reigning by divine right as ever the Pope could seem in the eyes of the strongest assertor of ecclesiastical claims. It is the growth of independent nations and Churches which has, more than anything else, dealt the death-blow to both theories. But in Frederick's time no man within the limits of the Empire could be a vehement opponent of the temporal or spiritual claims of the Pope without in some measure asserting a spiritual as well as a temporal power in the Emperor. This deification of the Imperial power attained its fullest and most systematic developement among the writers who undertook the defence of Lewis of Bavaria; but there is no doubt that ideas of the same kind were already busily at work in the days of Frederick. So far as Frederick was an opponent of the papal power, so far as he contemplated any transfer of power from the Papacy to the Empire, so far in short as he appeared at all in the character of an ecclesiastical reformer, he could only do so, if not in his own eyes at least in those of his admirers, by transferring to himself, as Roman Emperor, some portion of that official holiness of which he proposed to deprive the Roman Pontiff.

Now, perplexing as is the question of Frederick's personal belief, his external position, as Emperor and King, towards ecclesiastical questions is intelligible enough. He always professed strict orthodoxy of dogma in his own person, and in his legislation he strictly enforced such orthodoxy within the pale of the Christian Church. To the Jew and the Mahometan he gave full toleration; the Christian heretic found in him a persecutor as cruel as the most enthusiastic Dominican turned loose upon the victims of the elder Montfort. There is no necessary inconsistency in such a position; it is, in fact, one which was acknowledged by the general treatment of the Jews throughout the middle ages. The Jew or the Mahometan is something altogether external to the Church. He is a foreign enemy, not an

inborn rebel; he is one against whom the Church may rightfully wage war, but not one whom she can claim to bring before her domestic judgement-seat. But the heretic is a home-bred traitor; he is not a foreign enemy of the Church, but a native rebel against her; he is therefore an object, not of warfare, but of judicial punishment. A Christian sovereign then, according to the mediæval theory, is in no way bound to molest Jews or Mahometans simply as Jews or Mahometans; he must secure Christians from any molestation at their hands, from any proselytism to their creed; but the Jew or the Mahometan is not amenable to punishment simply on the ground of his misbelief. But the heretic is so amenable. The Jew has never been under the allegiance of the Church; he is a foreigner, not to be injured unless he commits some act of national enmity. But the heretic is one who has cast off his allegiance to the Church; he is a spiritual rebel to be chastised as unsparingly as the temporal rebel. This principle was acted on throughout the middle ages. The Jew was often exposed to unfavourable legislation; he was still more commonly visited with illegal or extra-legal oppression; but a Jew, simply as a Jew, was never held to be liable to the penalties of heresy. What is remarkable in Frederick's legislation is the real and effective nature of the toleration which he secured to Jews and Mahometans, combined with the fact that such a man as he was should appear as a religious persecutor under any circumstances. If he really handed over heretics to the flames in cold blood, simply to keep up for himself a character for orthodoxy which he did not deserve, it is hardly possible to conceive a greater measure of guilt. And the guilt is hardly less if he employed the popular prejudice against heresy to destroy political enemies under the garb of heretics. But it is possible to explain Frederick's persecutions without attributing to him such detestable wickedness as this. Though a legislator may be personally a freethinker, or even a confirmed unbeliever, it

does not at all follow that he thinks it either possible or desirable to abolish the public establishment of Christianity in his dominions. And, in the view of all times and places up to his day and long after, the public establishment of any religious system involved the legal punishment of those who separated from it. Frederick might thus hold it to be a matter of public order and public justice to chastise men for publicly rebelling against a system in which he had himself lost all personal faith. Persecution of this sort is far more hateful than the persecutions of the honest fanatic, who burns a few men in this world to save many from being burned in the next. Still it does not reach the same measure of guilt as the detestable hypocrisy which at first seems to be the obvious explanation of Frederick's conduct in this respect.

Frederick then professed strict orthodoxy of dogma, and persecuted those who departed from such orthodoxy. But it is plain that, as to the relations between the spiritual and temporal powers, he was not orthodox in the papal sense. It was hardly possible that any Emperor should be so. In the ideal theory of the two powers, the Pope and the Emperor are strictly coequal; the authority of each is alike divine within its own range. But rigidly to define the range of each is so hard a matter that this ideal theory could hardly fail to remain an ideal theory. The practical question always was whether the Emperor should be subject to the Pope or the Pope subject to the Emperor. On this question we cannot doubt that Frederick had formed a very decided judgement indeed. With such an intellect as his, in such a position as his, the subjection of the Pope to the Emperor would be an established principle from the first moment that he was capable of speculating about such matters at all. Every event of his life, every excommunication pronounced by a Pope, every act of hostility or treachery on the part of churchmen or military monks, would tend to confirm his decision. How far Frederick, the innovator, the revolutionist, the despiser

of received beliefs, may have been influenced by the traditional theories of the Holy Roman Empire is another matter. It is possible that he employed them as useful for his purpose, without that honest faith in them which clearly moved the Ottos and his own grandfather. The magnificent theory of the Empire may well have kindled his imagination, and he may have consciously striven to change that magnificent theory into a living reality. But the dominion at which he aimed was the effective immediate dominion of a Byzantine Emperor or a Saracen Sultan, rather than the shadowy lordship of a world every inch of which was really partitioned out among independent princes and commonwealths. But, whether strictly as Emperor or in any other character, there can be no doubt that Frederick gradually came to set before himself, as the main object of his life, the depression of the spiritual, and the exaltation of the temporal, power.

As we said before, whatever might have been Frederick's own secret views, such a transfer of power as this could, in that age, hardly take any outward form or shape except that of a further deification of the temporal power, a more complete acknowledgement of the Emperor, and not the Pope, as the true Vicar of Christ upon earth. We must also remember the tendencies and ways of expression of that age, how every thought took a religious turn, how, just as among the Puritans of the seventeenth century, every strong feeling instinctively clothed itself in scriptural language. Every one who knows anything of the literature of those times is familiar with the way in which the thoughts and words of Scripture are habitually applied by men to their own public or private affairs, applied in the most thorough good faith, but in a tone which to our habits seems irreverent, and sometimes almost blasphemous. It is therefore in no way wonderful to find devoted partizans of Frederick investing him with a religious character, and lavishing upon him the most sacred language of prophets and apostles. Again, the Christian Emperors

had all along kept on from their pagan predecessors several official phrases borrowed from the old heathendom. The Emperor and all that belonged to him was "divine" and "sacred;" his rescripts were "oracles;" his parents and his children were spoken of as if they belonged to a stock higher than mankind. Between these two influences we are not surprised to find Frederick spoken of in terms which, with modern feelings, we should apply only to the holiest of objects. The question now comes, Was Frederick ever directly and seriously put forth by himself or by his followers as the prophet, apostle, or Messiah of a new religion?

That he was so put forth seems to be the opinion of M. Bréholles, and we must wind up by a glance at the evidence on which he founds his belief. He would hardly rely with any great confidence on two or three scoffing speeches attributed to Frederick himself, which may or not have been really uttered by him, but which in any case illustrate the conception which men in general formed of him. Thus, as is well known, he was commonly believed to have said that Jews, Christians, and Saracens had been led away by three impostors, Moses, Jesus, and Mahomet, and that he, Frederick, would set up a better religion than any of them. If such a speech was ever made, it could only have been in mockery; it would convict Frederick of utter contempt for all religion, rather than of any serious scheme for setting up a religion of his own. The real stress of the argument lies on the meaning to be put on certain passages in which contemporary partizans of Frederick speak of him in language which undoubtedly has, at first sight, a very extraordinary sound. It is not wonderful, in an age when every name was played upon and made the subject of mystical explanations, that the fact that Frederick's great minister bore the name of Peter should have been made the subject of endless allusions. The parallel drawn between Simon Peter and his master and Peter de Vinea

and his master shocks the taste of our times, but it was thoroughly in the taste of the thirteenth century. Peter is to go on the water to his master; he is converted and he is to strengthen his brethren; his master has committed to him the trust to feed his sheep and to bear the keys of his kingdom. All these and other expressions of the same kind are found in the original documents collected by M. Bréholles. So we find Frederick hailed as a saint; —*Vivat, vivat Sancti Friderici nomen in populo.* We find Frederick himself, in one and the same passage, applying to his mother the old title of pagan divinity, and speaking of his birthplace in a way which implies a parallel between himself and Christ. Constance is *diva mater nostra*, and Jesi is *Bethleem nostra*. But there is one passage which goes beyond all the rest. This is found in a letter from a Sicilian bishop to Peter de Vinea, a letter which is by no means easy to understand by reason of the figurative language used throughout, but in which there is a direct parallel of the most daring kind between Christ and Frederick. After an allusion, brought in in a strange way, to the Last Supper and the rite then instituted, the writer goes on thus:—

"Unde non immerito me movet hæc externa relatio, quod Petrus, in cujus petra fundatur imperialis ecclesia, quum augustalis animus roboratur in cœna cum discipulis, tale certum potuit edixisse."

The language here is what we should nowadays call blasphemous, but it is really only the habit of scriptural application pushed to its extreme point. We should also remember that Frederick and his partizans, against whom so much Scripture had been quoted, would have a certain pleasure in showing that they could quote Scripture back again, as certainly no one ever did with more vigorous effect than Frederick himself at some stages of his controversy with Gregory. But we do not see that this or the other passages quoted are enough to justify some of the expressions used by M. Bréholles; such we mean as when he says:—

"Ecrivant aux cardinaux durant la vacance du saint-siége, en 1243, il leur rappelle l'exemple des Israelites, qui, errant sans chef dans le désert pendant quarante jours, en vinrent à prendre un veau d'or pour leur dieu: 'S'il faut renoncer à la consecration d'un nouveau pape, ajoute-t-il, qu'un autre saint des saints paraisse enfin, mais quel sera-t-il?' [Si papalis cessavit unctio, veniet ergo alius sanctus sanctorum, et quis ille est?] Lui-même apparemment, puisqu'il aspire au rôle de prophète et de Messie: et sur ce point les contemporains ne se trompaient guère quand ils accusaient Frédéric de chercher à usurper pour son propre compte le souverain pontificat. Delà à se déclarer d'une essence presque divine, il n'y a qu'un pas."

M. Bréholles here quotes the passages in which Frederick calls his son *Cæsarei sanguinis divina proles*, and speaks of his own mother and his own birth-place in the way in which we have already spoken. Elsewhere he says:—

"Ainsi Frédéric II. semble bien, de son vivant, adoré et divinisé à peu près comme une émanation de l'Esprit-Saint. Dans les termes qui servent à exprimer sa suprématie religieuse, il y a quelque chose qui tient à la fois du paganisme de l'Orient, qui rappelle le culte personnel imposé à leurs sujets par les empereurs de l'ancienne Rome et par les califes fatimites de l'Egypte." *

Surely this language is stronger than the passages quoted will bear out. To us it seems that the actual designs of Frederick were not unlike those of Henry the Eighth. We forego any comparison between the two men, than whom no two men could well have less of likeness to each other. Henry was at least a firm believer in his own theological system. Frederick, we cannot help thinking, looked on all theological systems chiefly as political instruments. But the immediate object of each was the same, to bring the spiritual power under the control of the temporal, to transfer to the King the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Pope. Within his own kingdom of Sicily the position of Frederick must have been identical with the position of Henry. If he could do no more, he could at least be both Pope and King in his own realm. But, as Emperor, he must have at least dreamed of a far wider supremacy, even if he gave up any practical hope of obtaining it. The Emperor, Lord of the World, might

* Was there any caliph, except Hakem, who imposed on his subjects anything which could be strictly called "*culte personnel*"?

dream of establishing a spiritual as well as a temporal supremacy over all the realms which were in theory placed beneath his superiority. He might deem it really possible to establish such a superiority within those realms which still retained some measure of connexion with the Empire. The result would have been the subjection of Western Europe, or, at all events, of three of its most important portions, to the deadening yoke of a caliphate.

Our remarks have been desultory and imperfect. Such a subject as the life and objects of Frederick the Second might furnish materials for volumes. We can profess to do little more than to call attention to some of the most wonderful chapters of European history, and to point to the collection of M. Bréholles as one of the most wonderful treasure-houses of original materials with which any scholar has ever enriched historical learning.

XI.

CHARLES THE BOLD.*

History of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. By John Foster Kirk. London: Murray. Vols. I. and II. 1863. Vol. III. 1868.

We welcome with genuine pleasure a narrative of an important portion of history by a writer who shows in no small degree the possession of real historic power. And we welcome it with still greater pleasure when we find that it proceeds from an American writer, a countryman of Mr. Prescott and Mr. Motley, a writer fully entitled to take his place alongside of them, and in some respects perhaps to be preferred to either. It is a matter of real satisfaction that so good an historical school should be still growing and prospering, and that untoward political events have not wholly checked its developement.† A very slight glance at Mr. Kirk's book is enough to show that we are dealing with a real historian, that we have before us a work of a wholly different kind from the countless volumes of superficial talk which are unceasingly poured out upon the world under the degraded garb of history. Mr. Kirk has his

* [I reviewed Mr. Kirk's first and second volumes in the National Review for April, 1864, and the third in the Fortnightly Review for October 1st, 1868. The former article was necessarily without my name, and the latter was necessarily with it. But I acknowledged the authorship of the National article in a note to the Fortnightly article. A certain amount of repetition could hardly be helped. I have therefore thrown the two into one continuous essay, but I have taken care to preserve the substance and sentiments of both, especially so far as they regard my estimate of Mr. Kirk's book.] [1871.]

† [Mr. Kirk wrote, and I wrote, while the American civil war was going on.] [1871.]

faults both of style and of matter. That we do not always come to the same conclusions as he does, in one of the most perplexed mazes to be found in the whole range of history, is as likely to be our fault as his. But, besides this, there are features in Mr. Kirk's style which hardly conform to the laws of a pure taste, and portions of his matter which hardly conform to the laws of accurate reasoning. Still his merits in both ways, alike as to form and as to substance, are real and great. He has studied history in its real sources, in the chronicles and documents of the time, and in the best modern writers of the various nations concerned. His research has been unwearied; and in dealing with his materials, he displays, notwithstanding a certain tendency to make the best of his hero, a very considerable degree of critical power. His narratives of events and his general pictures of the time are often of a very high order; it would not be going too far to say that many of them are first-rate. In his wider political speculations he is less happy. Long disquisitions on matters which hardly bear on his subject are needlessly brought in, and they are far from being written with the same clearness and power as the narrative portions of the book. And in his occasional references to times earlier than his own immediate subject Mr. Kirk's accuracy is certainly not unimpeachable. Besides a few strange errors in detail, it is plain that he is not wholly free from those popular misconceptions which have perverted the whole early history of Germany and France. These are serious defects; but they are defects which are quite overbalanced by the sterling excellences of the work, and they in no way hinder us from gladly hailing in Mr. Kirk a welcome recruit to the small band of real historians.

In estimating Mr. Kirk's style, it would be unfair not to take into account the fact that we are dealing, not with a British but with an American writer. We use the word British by choice, as best expressing mere geographical and political distinctions; for we trust that Mr. Kirk is not one

of those whose birth on the other side of the Ocean leads them to despise the name of Englishmen. American literature has a special interest, as bearing on the probable future fate of the language which is still common to all men of English blood in both continents. It is quite clear that good writers and speakers in the two countries speak and write—and will doubtless long go on to speak and write—exactly the same language. The divergences of speech which may occasionally be noticed between England and America simply arise from the fact that in both countries the language is corrupted by bad speakers and writers, and that British and American corruptions of speech do not always follow the same course. A few local expressions springing out of the several wants and circumstances of the two countries, a few words kept in use in one country after they have become obsolete in the other, make hardly any perceptible difference. They are only worth speaking of because half-informed people often apply the name of Americanisms to expressions which have simply dropped out of use in England, or which linger only in particular districts or among old-fashioned people. In Mr. Kirk's style it is not often that we detect any signs of the American origin of his book. Here and there indeed we find such words as "proclivities," "reliable,"* and the like; but these, though American corruptions of the language, have become too common among British writers to be marked as sure signs of American birth. But the worst of Mr. Kirk's defects is that, in some very important points, he does not improve as he goes on. In point of style there is a great and gradual falling-off from the beginning of the first volume to the end of the third. Mr. Kirk forms, in this respect, a striking contrast to his countryman Mr. Motley. When Mr. Motley began his work, he constantly mistook extravagance for eloquence. This was shown both in many of his descriptions and in his trick of giving fantastic—what we

* [It is perhaps worth noting that seven years ago I looked on these ugly and needless words as Americanisms.] [1871.]

may call sensational—headings to his chapters. But Mr. Motley's style, as his work went on, became gradually improved and chastened, till in his later volumes, though traces of the old leaven may still be tracked out, they appear only as casual blemishes, not seriously interfering with the general merits of a clear and forcible diction. Mr. Kirk, on the other hand, began far better than he went on. In the early part of his work his story is well told; he writes, especially in his strictly narrative portions, at once with clearness and with purity. It is only here and there that we stumble on a passage where a forced expression, or a confusion of metaphors, might offend a refined taste. Take for instance a passage in the second volume. The following parable is quite beyond us; indeed, we suspect some confusion in the writer's mind between the shaft of a pillar and the shaft of a pit:—

"The shaft of Saxon liberty, raised high and solid in the time of the deepest obscurity,—while the Continental races were still undergoing the crushing and rending of a veritable chaos,—had pierced through the supervening layers of the Norman Conquest and of feudalism, incrusting itself with glittering extraneous decorations, but preserving its simple and massive proportions; and now, in like manner, it towered above the too aspiring pretensions of royalty, reared upon other and narrower foundations" (ii. 339.)

As the work goes on, passages of this sort become thicker on the ground. As he warms with his tale, Mr. Kirk begins to take a pleasure in ever and anon lashing himself into a certain vehemence of language which often rises to the level of actual rant. In the third volume he stops at every crisis of his narrative to pour forth a page or so of what can be called by no name but that of absolute raving. Over the death-scene of his hero Mr. Kirk becomes simply frantic. He who, when he chooses, can tell a story as well as any man, breaks off into that wild spasmodic style whose mildest form consists in the writer rigidly turning his back on all the historical tenses. A scene, than which none more striking can be found in the whole range of history, dissolves in Mr. Kirk's hands into page on page of tawdry bombast. "O Night! thou art crueller than Day." "Bid his brother,

his captive nobles, his surviving servants, come." "Let Réné come." "Gentle Réné, good and gentle prince, God, we doubt not, hath pardoned many a fault of thine for those tender thoughts." "Thou art right, Commines." And so on, through several pages, till the book itself winds up with—". Alas! Alas!" in all the dignity of sensational printing. What can have possessed Mr. Kirk to take to this sort of thing it is impossible to guess. It certainly is not because he cannot do better. This frenzied way of writing is simply put on now and then as a kind of holiday garb. In his general narrative there is none of it. His battle-pieces are admirable; and, when he chooses, he can moralize without ranting. There is something really striking and pathetic when, after describing the spoil of Granson, the wanderings of the three great diamonds, the relics still treasured up in the Swiss towns, Mr. Kirk goes back to the days of Charles's own triumph and hard-heartedness at Dinant and Lüttich:—

"For our own part, while looking at these trophies, or turning over the leaves of the time-stained lists in which they are enumerated, we have been reminded of other relics and another inventory. The 'little ivory comb,' the 'pair of bride's gloves,' the 'agnus enchased with silver,' the 'necklace with ten little paternosters of amber,' picked up among the ashes of Dinant, and duly entered to the credit of 'my lord of Burgundy'—was there no connection between those memorials of humble joy, of modest love, of ruined homes, and these remains of fallen pride and grandeur? Yes, without doubt! though it be one which history, that tracks the diamond from hand to hand, is incapable of tracing."

Perhaps even here a very stern critic might say that Mr. Kirk was verging on the sensational, but if this had been the extreme point which Mr. Kirk had allowed himself, it would have been unreasonable to find fault. Mr. Kirk, in a word, can write well, and he constantly does write well. But there is for that very reason the less excuse for his ever deliberately choosing to write in the wild fashion in which he has written the last pages of his book.

To turn from manner to matter, large parts of the general disquisitions contained in the second and third chapters of

Mr. Kirk's fourth book seem to us wanting both in force and in clearness. In many places Mr. Kirk needlessly goes out of his way to grapple with earlier writers, as Hallam and Macaulay, and that sometimes altogether without ground. Thus Mr. Kirk tells us in a note:—

"We cannot help protesting* against what seems to us the most radically false, the most pernicious in the general inferences to be drawn from it, and yet the most characteristic—inasmuch as it even runs through his literary criticisms—of the paradoxes in which Macaulay loved to indulge. Speaking of England in the reign of John, he says: 'Her interest was so directly opposed to the interest of her rulers that she had no hope but in their errors or misfortunes. The talents and even the virtues of her six first French Kings were a curse to her. *The follies and vices of the seventh were her salvation.*' And so too when he comes to a later period he writes: 'Of James the First, as of John, it may be said that if his administration had been able and splendid, it would probably have been fatal to our country, and that *we owe more to his weaknesses and meannesses than to the wisdom and courage of much better sovereigns*'" (ii. 355).

Now Mr. Kirk looks on these words of Lord Macaulay's as contradicting a remark of his own that the English Parliament and nation, in contradistinction to the *communes* and Estates of the Netherlands, "seconded the enterprising spirit of their monarchs while asserting and enlarging their own constitutional rights." But there is no contradiction and no paradox. What Lord Macaulay says and what Mr. Kirk says are both perfectly true of different periods of English history. Lord Macaulay is speaking of our "French kings," of the first seven kings after the Conquest. And what he says of them is perfectly true. England had no interest in the aggrandizement of Henry the Second in France. For the Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine to strengthen himself at the expense of the King of Paris could in no way profit the kingdom which he held as a sort of insular dependency. The folly of John lost Normandy and all his other French possessions except Aquitaine. That loss was

* By the way, we cannot help protesting, in our turn, against Mr. Kirk's fashion of speaking of himself as "we" and "us." In a newspaper or review there are manifest reasons for the practice, none of which apply to a book written by a single avowed author. Such a man should not talk of himself more than need be; but, when he does talk of himself, he should say "I" and "me."

the salvation of England. Hitherto England had been, like Sardinia and Sicily in later times, the source of the highest title, but by no means the most valued possession, of her sovereigns. But now England again became the most important part of the King of England's dominions. England had been a dependency of Anjou; Aquitaine was now a dependency of England. At last a King of England undertook a war of aggrandizement in France, from which England and English freedom were then in a position to reap great, though doubtless only indirect, advantage. All this was the direct result of the follies and vices of John. What Lord Macaulay says is perfectly true of the reign of John; what Mr. Kirk says is perfectly true of the reign of Edward the Third. There is no kind of opposition between the two statements, and, both in this and in several other places, Mr. Kirk need not have gone out of his way to pass censures on Lord Macaulay which are quite undeserved.

We also mentioned occasional inaccuracies and misconceptions as to earlier times as among the faults of Mr. Kirk's book. It is ludicrous to place (i. 288) the saying "Non Angli sed angeli" in the mouth of Gregory the Seventh. It is hardly less so to call Citeaux (i. 45) the "head of the great *Carthusian* order." And such a passage as the following is utterly inaccurate in fact, and still more false in deduction:

> "But the Norman sovereigns of England were not related, at least by any close affinity, to the Capetian race. They had acquired their chief possessions in France, as they had acquired the English crown, not by grant or inheritance, but by the power of their arms. They were foreigners and open enemies; their only adherents in France were secret traitors or avowed rebels; and they could not, therefore, mask their designs against it under the pretext of serving the nation and reforming the state" (i. 3).

We suppose that Mr. Kirk is not here thinking of the strictly "Norman sovereigns of England," the Conqueror and his sons. It is not likely that he means any king before Henry the Second. But Henry the Second did not acquire his chief possessions in France by force of arms, but by lawful inheritance and marriage: Normandy came from

his mother, Anjou from his father, Aquitaine from his wife.* He was not a foreigner, but a Frenchman by blood and language; he was an open enemy only as every powerful and turbulent vassal was an open enemy; in what sense his "adherents in France" were "secret traitors or avowed rebels" we cannot in the least understand. It is not likely that Mr. Kirk uses the word *France* in the older sense, the sense in which it is opposed to Aquitaine and Normandy; and it is hard to understand how a loyal subject and "adherent" of the Duke of Normandy or Aquitaine can be called a rebel or a traitor against the King of France. It may be—indeed the next paragraph makes it probable—that Mr. Kirk intends this description to apply, not to Henry the Second and Richard the First, but to Edward the Third and Henry the Fifth. But the "Norman sovereigns of England" is an odd way of describing the two latter princes, and the assertion as to the origin of the dominion of the Kings of England in France remains equally inaccurate in any case.

In point of research Mr. Kirk's labours have been in every way praiseworthy. He has made diligent use of all printed sources, and he has also toiled unweariedly among the manuscript archives of the Swiss Cantons; nor has he neglected another object of study, which is quite as worthy of the historian's attention as anything recorded by pen and ink. He has thoroughly mastered the geographical features of the districts where the great events of his history took place. Mr. Kirk's geographical minuteness, illustrated as it is by careful ground-plans, makes his battle-pieces clear, lively, and intelligible. We can here speak as something more than a mere reader. We cannot pretend to have gone over the field of Granson with the same minuteness as Mr. Kirk has done, but we have seen enough of it to be able to

* [Henry inherited Normandy, his mother's inheritance, peacefully; but his father had conquered it from Stephen.

I should now hardly speak of Normandy and Aquitaine as "possessions in France."] 1886.

bear a general testimony to the merit of his description of the siege and the battle; and at the same time we heard enough in Switzerland of Mr. Kirk's labours among manuscript sources of information to make us put full confidence in whatever he professes to have drawn from archives which we have not ourselves examined.

Putting aside then Mr. Kirk's occasional bursts of extravagance, which might be simply cut out of his book without doing it the least damage, and making some other deductions which we shall have to make before we have done, we have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Kirk has given us a good, clear, and vigorous narrative of the career of Charles the Bold, containing much that will be quite new to the English reader. Where he breaks down is in failing to give his subject the necessary connexion with the general history of Europe before and afterwards. Mr. Kirk, who ends his history with a frantic ejaculation over his hero's dead body, does not even attempt to connect his hero's story with anything that came after him, and his attempts to connect it with anything that went before cannot be called successful. Mr. Kirk hardly attempts to trace matters at all further back than to the establishment of the princes of the house of Valois in the French duchy of Burgundy, and the few references which he makes to earlier times, or to countries beyond the immediate range of his story, show no width or accuracy of grasp. He has not, for instance, mastered the various meanings and uses of the name Burgundy, of which minute inquirers have reckoned up no less than ten. In truth it was not likely that Mr. Kirk should make himself thoroughly master of this aspect of his subject, because he shows throughout his book that he has failed fully to grasp the importance of historical geography. Physical and picturesque geography he is thoroughly master of, as he shows by his descriptions of Granson and Morat. But he has not been able fully to emancipate himself from bondage to the modern map. Of course he knows that the frontiers of France and of Switzerland were widely different then from

what they are now. But he has not got rid of a sort of superstition which affects many even among people who know the facts—a sort of notion that, even if France, as a matter of fact, once had a narrower frontier than it has at present, still it was in the eternal fitness of things that it should some day reach to its present frontier, or to a frontier wider still. In short, Mr. Kirk has listened to French babble about natural boundaries and the frontier of the Rhine. Now every one who has mastered historical geography knows that this sort of talk is babble and nothing else. There was no more reason in the nature of things why Arles or Nancy should bow to Paris than there was why Paris should bow to Arles or Nancy. Mr. Kirk does not thoroughly understand the utter difference in blood and speech between Gaul north and south of the Loire, heightened by utter difference in political position between Gaul east and west of the Saone. He seems throughout to identify the modern kingdom of France with that ancient monarchy of the Franks which is far more truly to be identified with the German kingdom which was dissolved in 1806. Thus, in introducing a really beautiful description of the county of Burgundy, he tells us how,

"After a long separation from the Duchy of Burgundy, it again became subject to the same rule in the early part of the fourteenth century. It was a fief, however, not of France, but of the Empire, *though situated within the natural boundaries of France,* governed by a line of princes of French descent, and inhabited by a people who spoke the French language" (i. 47).

Here Mr. Kirk knows the facts, but he does not fully understand them. He is in a manner surprised at finding a great fief of the Empire within what, on the modern map, are the boundaries of France. As for "natural boundaries," they may of course be placed wherever any one pleases. It is quite as easy to call the Elbe the natural boundary of France as it is so to speak of the Rhine. It is quite as easy, and more true historically, to give that name to the Rhone and the Saone. The French counts of Burgundy, one of them a reigning king of France, had come in quite

lately through female succession from the descendants of Frederick and Beatrice. As for language, the county of Burgundy, like nearly the whole of the kingdom of Burgundy, spoke a Romance language; but we greatly doubt its speaking in those days anything that could fairly be called French. In another place we read:

"Wherever the French race existed, wherever the French language was spoken, wherever mountain or river offered a bulwark to the integrity of the French soil, there the French monarchy must seek to fix its sway and establish its supremacy. France, in distinction from all other nations or countries, aspires to uniformity and completeness. Her foreign wars, her foreign conquests, for the most part have had for their object the attainment or recovery of her 'natural boundaries.' Again and again the tide has swollen to those limits, often with a force that carried it beyond them. Again and again it has receded, leaving a margin still to be reclaimed, but bearing still the traces of a former flood" (ii. 157).

Towards the end of this passage Mr. Kirk gets so metaphorical that we hardly know what he means. But what on earth is "the French race"? Why are all sorts of Romance dialects to be jumbled together under the name of "the French language"? And Elsass at least is surely not peopled by "the French race," nor did its inhabitants ever speak the tongue either of *oc* or of *oil*. On Mr. Kirk's principles we must take to "rectifying" the map of Europe; and a poor look-out it will be for Brussels, Saint Heliers, Neufchâtel, and Geneva.

So again with regard to Switzerland. Though it is a point essential to Mr. Kirk's argument to bear in mind that Vaud was, in Charles the Bold's time, a country absolutely foreign to Switzerland, though he constantly points out the fact whenever his narrative calls for it, yet he still carries about with him some notion about Helvetia and the Helvetii, as if that Celtic tribe had some kind of historical connexion with the Swabian cities and districts which united to form the Old League of High Germany.* Of

* It is most curious to see how early this sort of confusion arose. Valerius Anshelm, who flourished about 1530, speaking of the County of Burgundy, says:—"Ein wunderbare Sach, dass die *uralten Eydgenossen* so vil uf dise Graffschaft gesetzt hatten, dass ehe sie davon stahn wölltint [sie] ehe ihr Land, Lyb und Gut gegem Römischen Keiser Julio unabwyslich wagtent"

course he knows these things, but he does not fully grasp them; and through not realizing them, he often fails fully to grasp the true position of Charles and of those with whom Charles had to deal. He of course knows, but he does not seem thoroughly to enter into, the purely German position and purely German feeling of the Confederates of those days. In the Swiss writers the war is always a war of *Dutch* and *Welsh* (*Tütschen* and *Wälschen*), and the position of the Confederates as members of the Roman Empire and of the German nation is always put strongly forward. The "tütsche Nation" is constantly heard of in Swiss mouths as something entitled to the deepest patriotic affection, and we hear not uncommonly of "das heilig Rych," and of "unser Herr der Keiser," as of objects to which Swiss loyalty had by no means ceased to be due. Now there is no habit of the historical mind so hard to acquire in its fulness as this habit of constantly bearing in mind the political divisions and the nomenclature of the particular time of which one is writing, and of utterly freeing oneself from what we have already spoken of as the bondage of the modern map. It is by no means always a question of mere knowledge, but rather a question of practically remembering and making use of one's knowledge. Many a man who, if directly asked for the names and divisions which existed at a particular date, would at once give the right answer, will go away and use some expression which shows that his knowledge of them is not a real living thing which he constantly carries about with him. We do not at all mean that Mr. Kirk is a remarkable offender this way, or that his pages are full of geographical blunders. It is quite the

(Berner-Chronik, i. 145). To call the Helvetii "Uralten *Eydgenossen*" is even more wonderful than when Machiavelli calls the Gauls of Brennus *Frenchmen;* but it is almost more amazing still when, in another passage (i. 140), Valerius Anshelm distinctly claims the ancient frontier of the Helvetii as the hereditary frontier of the Confederates: "Hat ein glücksame Stadt Bern, mit Bystand ihrer Eydgnossen . . . croberet und gewunnen *der uralten Eydgnossschaft uralte Landmarch*, gegen Sonnen-Nidergang reichend—namlich das Land zwüschen dem Läberer-Gebirg und dem Rotten, von Erlach und Murten an bis gan Ienf an die Brugg," &c.

contrary. Mr. Kirk's position as an historian is many degrees above that level. We only mention what strikes us as his deficiencies in this respect, because it influences the general character of his narrative, and sometimes hinders him from fully grasping the aspect of affairs as it looked in the eyes of a contemporary.

It follows from what we have said that the earlier part of Mr. Kirk's work is the best. The career of Charles the Bold, as he points out, naturally falls into two parts, and Mr. Kirk is more successful in dealing with the former of the two. This twofold division is naturally suggested by Charles's twofold position. His career divides itself into a French and a German portion. In both alike he is exposed to the restless rivalry of Lewis of France; but in the one period that rivalry is carried on openly within the French territory, while in the second stage the crafty king finds the means to deal far more effectual blows through the agency of Teutonic hands. That Charles should thus play a part in the affairs of both countries naturally followed from his position as at once a French prince and a prince of the Empire; but it is certainly remarkable that his two spheres of action can be thus mapped out with almost as much chronological as geographical precision. The position of Charles was a very peculiar one; it requires a successful shaking-off of modern notions fully to take in what it was. He held the rank of one of the first princes in Europe without being a king, and without possessing an inch of ground for which he did not owe service to some superior lord. And, more than this, he did not owe service to one lord only. The phrase of "Great Powers" had not been invented in the fifteenth century; but there can be no doubt that, if it had been, the Duke of Burgundy would have ranked among the foremost of them. He was, in actual strength, the equal of his royal neighbour to the west, and far more than the equal of his Imperial neighbour to the east. Yet for every inch of his territories he owed a

vassal's duty to one or other of them. Placed on the borders of France and the Empire, some of his territories were held of the Empire and some of the French crown. Charles, Duke of Burgundy, Count of Flanders and Artois, was a vassal of France; but Charles, Duke of Brabant, Count of Burgundy, Holland, and a dozen other duchies and counties, held his dominions as a vassal of Cæsar. His dominions were large in positive extent, and they were valuable out of all proportion to their extent. No other prince in Europe was the direct sovereign of so many rich and flourishing cities, rendered still more rich and flourishing through the long and, in the main, peaceful administration of his father. The cities of the Netherlands were incomparably greater and more prosperous than those of France or England; and, though they enjoyed large municipal privileges, they were not, like those of Germany, independent commonwealths, acknowledging only an external superior in their nominal lord. Other parts of his dominions, the duchy of Burgundy especially, were as rich in men as Flanders was rich in money. So far the Duke of Burgundy had some great advantages over every other prince of his time. But, on the other hand, his dominions were further removed than those of any prince in Europe from forming a compact whole. He was not king of one kingdom, but duke, count, and lord of innumerable duchies, counties, and lordships, acquired by different means, held by different titles and of different overlords, speaking different languages, subject to different laws, transmitted according to different rules of succession, and each subject to possible escheat to its own lord. These various territories moreover had as little geographical as they had political connexion. They lay in two large masses, the two Burgundies forming one and the Low Countries forming the other, so that their common master could not go from one of his capitals to another without passing through a foreign territory. And, even within these two great masses, there were portions of territory intersecting the

ducal dominions which there was no hope of annexing by fair means. The dominions of a neighbouring duke or count might be acquired by marriage, by purchase, by exchange, by various means short of open robbery. But the dominions of the free cities and of the ecclesiastical princes were in their own nature exempt from any such processes. If the Duke of Burgundy became also Duke of Brabant, the inhabitants simply passed from one line of princes to another; no change was involved in their laws or in their form of government. But, as Mr. Kirk well points out, the bishopric of Lüttich could never pass by marriage, inheritance, forfeiture, or purchase. Just as little could the free Imperial city of Besançon. The duke whose dominions hemmed them in could win them only by sheer undisguised conquest, a conquest too which must necessarily change the whole framework of their government. The rights of princely government were in no way affected by the transfer, even the violent transfer, of a duchy from one duke to another; but the rights of the Church in one case, and the rights of civic freedom in the other, would have been utterly trampled under foot by the annexation of a bishopric or a free city. Charles too, lord of so many lordships, was also closely connected with many royal houses. In France he was not only the first feudatory of the kingdom, the Dean of the Peers of France; he was also a prince of the blood royal, with no great number of lives between him and the crown. On his mother's side he claimed descent from the royal houses of England and Portugal: he closely identified himself with England; he spoke our language; he played an active part in our politics; he seems to have cherished a hope, one perhaps not wholly unreasonable, that, among the revolutions and disputed successions of our country, the extinction of both the contending houses might at last place the island crown upon his own brow. Looking to his eastern frontier, to the states which he held of the Empire, he was beyond all comparison the most powerful of the Imperial feudatories.

The next election might place him upon the throne of the Cæsars, where he would be able to reign after a very different sort from the feeble Austrian whom he aspired to succeed or to displace. Or, failing of any existing crown, he might dream of having a crown called out of oblivion for his special benefit. Burgundy might again give its name to a kingdom, and his scattered duchies and lordships might be firmly welded together under a royal sceptre. Perhaps no man ever had so many dreams, dreams which in any one else would have been extravagant, naturally suggested to him by the position in which he found himself by inheritance.

And now what sort of man was he who inherited so much, and whose inheritance prompted him to strive after so much more? We wish to speak of him as he was in his better days; towards the end of his life the effect of unexpected misfortunes darkened all his faults, even if it did not actually touch his reason. Mr. Kirk is a biographer, and, as such, he is bound by a sort of feudal tenure to "rehabilitate," as the cant word is, the lord under whom he takes service. We do not at all blame him for trying to make out the best case he can for his hero; indeed we can go much further, and say that, in a great degree, he successfully makes out his case. Though he is zealous, he is by no means extravagant, on behalf of Charles. Though he holds, and we think with reason, that Charles has commonly had less than justice done to him, he by no means sets him up as a perfect model. He rates both his abilities and his character higher than they are commonly rated, but he does not claim for him any exalted genius, neither does he undertake to be the apologist of all his actions. He is satisfied with showing that a man who played an important part in an important time was neither the brute nor the fool that he has been described both by partizan chroniclers and by modern romance-writers. Even in the point where we see most reason to differ from Mr. Kirk, we have little to object to as far as regards Charles

himself. We shall presently see that, in estimating the causes of the war between Charles and the Swiss, Mr. Kirk lays the whole blame upon the Confederates, and represents the Duke of Burgundy as something like an injured victim. Allowing for a little natural exaggeration, we think Mr. Kirk is fairly successful in his justification of Charles; we do not think him equally successful in his inculpation of the Confederates.

Charles was perhaps unlucky in the age in which he lived; he was certainly unlucky in the predecessor whom he succeeded and in the rival against whom he had to struggle. It may be, as Mr. Kirk says, that he was better fitted for an earlier age than that in which he lived; it is certain that he was quite unfit either to succeed Philip the Good or to contend against Lewis the Eleventh. One can have no hesitation in saying that Charles was morally a better man than his father. He had greater private virtues, and he was certainly not stained with greater public crimes. Yet Philip passed with unusual prosperity and reputation through a reign of unusual length, while the career of Charles was short and stormy, and he left an evil memory behind him. Philip, profligate as a man and unprincipled as a ruler, was still the Good Duke, who lived beloved and died regretted by his subjects. Charles, chaste and temperate in his private life, and with a nearer approach to justice and good faith in his public dealings than most princes of his time, was hated even by his own soldiers, and died unlamented by any one.* As in many other men, the virtues and the vices of Charles were closely linked together. He knew no mercy either for himself or for anybody else. Austere in his personal morals and a strict

* Charles, to say the least, never became a national hero anywhere. The writers of the sixteenth century, who compiled their chronicles within his dominions and inscribed them to his descendants, Oudegherst, Pontus Heuterus, his copyist Haræus, and the like, speak of him without any sort of enthusiasm; indeed, they are full of those views of his character and actions which Mr. Kirk strongly, and often truly, denounces as popular errors.

avenger of vice in others, he probably made himself enemies by his very virtues, where a little genial profligacy might have made him friends. His home government was strictly just; his ear was open to the meanest petitioner, and he was ready to send the noblest offender to the scaffold. But such stern justice was not the way to make himself popular in those days. A justice which knows not how to yield or to forgive is hardly suited for fallible man in any age, and in that age Charles sometimes drew blame upon himself by acts which we should now look on as crowning him with honour. His inexorable justice refused to listen to any entreaties for the life of a gallant young noble* who had murdered a man of lower degree. In this we look on him as simply discharging the first duty of a sovereign; in his own age the execution seemed to men of all ranks to be an act of remorseless cruelty. In short, Charles, as a civil ruler, practised none of the arts by which much worse rulers have often made themselves beloved. He was chary of gifts, of praise, of common courtesy. No wonder then that so many of his servants forsook him for a prince who at least knew how to appreciate and to reward their services. And what Charles was as a ruler he was even more conspicuously as a captain. In warfare his discipline was terrible; he imposed indeed no hardship on the lowest sentinel which he did not equally impose upon himself; but the commander who had no kind word for any one, and a heavy punishment for the slightest offence, did not go the way to win the love of his soldiers. His cruelty towards Dinant and Lüttich did not greatly exceed—in some respects it did not equal—the ordinary cruelty of the age; but the cold and *quasi*-judicial severity with which he planned the work of destruction is almost more

* See the story of the Bastard of Hamaide in Barante, Ducs de Bourgogne, x. 116; Kirk, i. 462. The better known tale told by Pontus Heuterus (Rerum Burgundiacarum, lib. v. cap. 5), and worked up into the story of Rhynsault and Sapphira in the Spectator, whether true or false, is at least quite in character.

repulsive than the familiar horrors of the storm and the sack. It was his utter want of sympathy with mankind which made Charles the Bold hated, while really worse men have been beloved. The ambition of Philip the Good was more unprincipled than that of his son, but it was more moderate, and kept more carefully within the bounds of possibility. The means by which he gained large portions of his dominions, Holland and Hennegau especially, were perhaps more blameworthy than anything in the career of Charles, and in particular acts of cruelty and in violent outbursts of wrath there was little to choose between father and son. But Philip's ambition was satisfied with now and then seizing a province or two which came conveniently within his grasp; he did not keep the world constantly in commotion; he had no longing after royal or Imperial crowns, and indeed refused them when they came in his way; his rule was on the whole peaceful and beneficent, and his very annexations, when they were once made, secured large districts from the horrors of border warfare. But Charles was always planning something, and the world was always wondering what he might be planning. He attacked and annexed so widely that it was no wonder if even those whom he had no mind to attack deemed it necessary to stand ready for him. His loftiest flights of ambition were far from being so wild and reckless as they are commonly represented; his dream of a new Burgundian kingdom was far from irrational; still less was there anything monstrous either in a great French prince aspiring to a paramount influence in France, or in a great German prince aspiring to the crown of the Empire. But the misfortune of Charles was that he was always aspiring after something; he was always grasping at something which he had not, instead of enjoying what he had. Neither his own subjects nor strangers were allowed a moment's peace: wars with France, wars with Lüttich, Gelders annexed, Elsass purchased, Neuss besieged, Lorraine conquered, Provence bargained for, were enough

to keep the whole world in commotion. The ten years of Charles's reign are as rich in events as the forty-eight years of his father.

Mr. Kirk is fond of enlarging on Charles's good faith, and, for a prince of the fifteenth century, the praise is not wholly undeserved. As compared with the contemporary kings of England and France, the Duke of Burgundy may fairly pass for a man of his word.* He certainly did not openly trample on oaths and obligations like Edward the Fourth, nor did he carry on a systematic trade of secret intrigue like Lewis the Eleventh. Even in the affair of Péronne, to which Mr. Kirk frequently points as an exception to Charles's general straightforwardness, there seems to have been no deliberate treachery on Charles's part, though there certainly was a breach in words of the safe-conduct which he had given to Lewis. The King sought an interview of his own accord; it was to take place in the then Burgundian town of Péronne. The Duke gave the King a safe-conduct, notwithstanding anything which had happened or might happen. While Lewis was at Péronne, Charles discovered, or believed that he had discovered, evidence that the King was plotting with the revolted people of Lüttich. Charles then kept him as a prisoner till he had signed an unfavourable treaty, and further obliged him to accompany him on his campaign against Lüttich, and to witness and take a part in the utter overthrow of his allies. Here was undoubtedly a breach of an engagement: according to the letter of the bond, Charles should have taken Lewis safe back into his own dominions, and should have declared war and pursued him the moment he had crossed the frontier. But, setting aside the literal breach of faith, to deal with Lewis as he did, to humble him before all the world, to make him follow where he was most unwilling to go, was quite in character with the stern and ostentatious justice of

* "Quod numquam antea fecerat, ruptâ fide," says Heuter (liv. v. c. 12) of the execution of the prisoners at Granson.

Charles. As a mere breach of faith, it was a light matter compared with the everyday career of Lewis himself. But what shocked the feeling of the time was for a vassal to put his suzerain lord under personal duress. To rebel against such a lord and make war upon him was an ordinary business; but for a Duke of Burgundy to make a King of France his prisoner was a breach of all feudal reverence, a sacrilegious invasion of the sanctity of royalty, which carried men's minds back to a deed of treason more than five hundred years old.* We cannot look upon this business at Péronne as being morally of so deep a dye as the long course of insincerity pursued by Charles with regard to the marriage of his daughter. It is clear that he was possessed with a strong and not very intelligible dread of a son-in-law in any shape. Like many other princes, he shrank from the notion of a successor; he shrank especially from a successor who would not be one of his own blood, but the husband of his daughter, one who most likely would seek in her marriage and his affinity nothing but stepping-stones to the ducal or royal crown of Burgundy. So far one can enter into the feeling; but it is clear that Charles first carried it to a morbid extent, and then made use of it for a disingenuous political purpose. He held out hopes of his daughter's hand to every prince whom he wished for the moment to attach to his interests, without the least serious intention of bestowing her upon any of them. Mary was used as the bait for Charles of Guienne, for Nicolas of Calabria, for Maximilian of Austria. Now this, though it might serve an immediate end, was a base and selfish policy, which could not fail to leave, as in the end it did leave, both his daughter and his dominions without any lawful or acknowledged protector. The feelings alike of a father

* As Comines says (liv. ii. c. 7), "Le Roy se voyoit logé rasibus d'une grosse tour, où un Comte de Vermandois fit mourir un sein predecesseur Roy de France." The allusion is to the two imprisonments of Charles the Simple at Péronne (928–9) by Count Hubert of Vermandois; see Richer, lib. i. cc. 46, 54; Flodoard in anno; Palgrave, Normandy and England, ii. 93.

and of a sovereign should have made Charles overcome his dread of an acknowledged successor, rather than run the risk of leaving a young girl to grapple unprotected with the turbulent people of Flanders and with such a neighbour as Lewis the Eleventh. It is here, we think, rather than in his formal breach of faith at Péronne, that we should look for the most marked exception to that general character for good faith and sincerity which is claimed for Charles by his biographer. It is certain that he piqued himself upon such a character, and that his conduct was on the whole not inconsistent with it. The worst deeds of his later career, his treatment of the princes of Lorraine and Würtemburg, his unprovoked attack on Neuss, his cruelties after the loss of Elsass, were deeds of open violence rather than of bad faith. Through the whole of his dealings with Austria and Switzerland there runs a vein of conscious sincerity, a feeling that his own straightforwardness was not met with equal straightforwardness on the part of those with whom he had to deal.

Where then Charles failed was that he had neither the moral nor the intellectual qualities which alone could have enabled him to carry out the great schemes which he was ever planning. Success has often been the lot of brave, frank, and open-hearted princes, who have carried everything before them, and who have won hearts as well as cities by storm. Sometimes again it has fallen to the lot of a cold, crafty, secret plotter, like Charles's own rival and opposite. The gallant, genial, Réné of Lorraine won the love of subjects and allies, and recovered the dominions which Charles had stolen from him. Lewis, from his den at Plessis, established his power over all France; he extended the bounds of France by two great provinces, and permanently attached the stout pikes and halberts of Switzerland to his interest. But Charles the Bold, always planning schemes which needed the genius and opportunities of Charles the Great, was doomed to failure in the nature of things. A prince, just, it may be,

and truthful, but harsh and pitiless, who never made a friend public or private, whose very virtues were more repulsive than other men's vices, who displayed no single sign of deep or enlarged policy, but whose whole career was one simple embodiment of military force in its least amiable form,—such a prince was not the man to found an empire; he was the very man to lose the dominions which he had himself inherited and conquered.

And now we turn from the character of the man to the events in which he was the actor or the instrument. The history of Charles is a history of the highest and most varied interest. The tale, as a mere tale, as a narrative of personal adventure and a display of personal character, is one of the most attractive in European history. As such it has been chosen by Scott as the material for two of his novels, one of which, if not absolutely one of his masterpieces, at any rate ranks high among his writings. It is probably from Quentin Durward that most English readers have drawn their ideas of Lewis the Eleventh and of Charles the Bold; some may even have drawn their main ideas of the fights of Granson, Morat, and Nancy from the hurried narrative in Anne of Geierstein. In fact a nobler subject, whether for romance or poetry or tragedy, can hardly be conceived than the exaltation and the fall of the renowned Burgundian Duke. But to the historian the fate of Charles and his duchy has an interest which is far higher and wider than this. Chronologically and geographically alike, Charles and his duchy form the great barrier, or the great connecting link, whichever we choose to call it, between the main divisions of European history and European geography. The dukes of Burgundy of the house of Valois form a sort of bridge between the latter Middle Age and the period of the Renaissance and the Reformation. They connect those two periods by forming the kernel of the vast dominion of that Austrian house to which their inheritance fell, and which, mainly by virtue

of that inheritance, fills such a space in the history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But the dominions of the Burgundian dukes hold a still higher historical position. They may be said to bind together the whole of European history for the last thousand years. From the ninth century to the nineteenth, the politics of Europe have largely gathered round the rivalry between the Eastern and the Western kingdoms—in modern language, between Germany and France. From the ninth century to the nineteenth, a succession of efforts have been made to establish, in one shape or another, a middle state between the two. Over and over again during that long period have men striven to make the whole or some portion of the frontier lands stretching from the mouth of the Rhine to the mouth of the Rhone into an independent barrier state. The first expression of the idea is to be seen in the kingdom of Lothar, the grandson of Charles the Great, a kingdom of which Provence and the Netherlands were alike portions. The neutralizations, or attempted neutralizations, of Switzerland, Savoy, Belgium, and Lüzelburg, have been the feebler contributions of the nineteenth century to the same work. Meanwhile various kingdoms and duchies of Burgundy and Lorraine have risen and fallen, all of them, knowingly or unknowingly, aiming at the same European object. That object was never more distinctly aimed at, and it never seemed nearer to its accomplishment, than when Charles the Bold actually reigned from the Zuyder Zee to the lake of Neufchâtel, and was not without hopes of extending his frontier to the gulf of Lyons.

To understand his position, to understand the position of the lands over which he ruled, it is not needful to go back to any of the uses of the Burgundian name earlier than the division of the Empire in 888. The old Lotharingia of forty years earlier, the narrow strip reaching from the German Ocean to the Mediterranean, had then ceased to exist as a separate state. Its northern portion had become the later Lotharingia, that border land between the Eastern

and Western kingdoms, which for a hundred years formed an endless subject of dispute between them. Its southern portion had become what our Old-English Chroniclers emphatically call the "middel-rice"—the Middle kingdom, the state placed between France, Germany, and Italy. This is that Burgundy, sometimes forming one kingdom, sometimes two, which was at last annexed to the Empire, and of which Arles was the capital, where those Emperors who chose to go through a somewhat empty ceremony took the crown of their Burgundian kingdom.* This kingdom took in the County Palatine of Burgundy, better known as Franche Comté, which, till the days of Lewis the Fourteenth, remained a fief of the Empire. It did not take in the Duchy of Burgundy, the duchy of which Dijon was the capital, which was always a fief of the crown of France. Now there can be no doubt that Charles, Duke of the French Duchy, Count of the Imperial Palatinate, Duke, by inheritance, of the Lower Lorraine (or Brabant), Duke, by conquest, of the Upper Lorraine, had always before his eyes the memory of these earlier Burgundian and Lotharingian kingdoms. Holding, as he did, parts of old Lotharingia and parts of old Burgundy, there can be no doubt that he aimed at the re-establishment of a great Middle kingdom, which should take in all that had ever been Burgundian or Lotharingian ground. He aimed in short, as others have aimed before and since, at the formation of a state which should hold a central position between France, Germany, and Italy—a state which should discharge, with infinitely greater strength, all the duties which our own age has endeavoured to throw on Switzerland, Belgium, and Savoy.

Now Mr. Kirk is by no means wholly blind to this peculiar aspect of his hero, an aspect which brings him into so remarkable a connexion with times long before him and with times long after him. But it is not present to his mind in any life-like way; it is not present as it would be to one who was really master of European history as a

* See above, pp. 189, 271.

whole. In our way of looking at it, the career of Charles the Bold forms the central point in the history of a thousand years, and it cannot be worthily treated without constantly looking both forwards and backwards. There can be no doubt that, through the whole latter part of Charles's reign, his object was thus to extend his dominions, and to reign as a Burgundian king, the peer of either of his two overlords to the right and left of him. This view seems to us to explain the whole of his latter policy. It seems also to explain the mixture of dread and wonder with which he was looked on, and the restless apprehensions which never ceased to work among all who felt that they were possibly marked out for annexation.

This twofold position of Charles, as at once a French and a German prince, forms the key to his history. When he had turned away his thoughts from his schemes of pre-eminence within the French kingdom, the creation of such a middle state as we have spoken of was a natural form for his ambition to take. His schemes of this kind form the great subject of the second of the two great divisions of his history. The second division then is undoubtedly the more important, but the former is by far the better known. It has the great advantage of being recorded by one of the few mediæval writers—if Philip of Comines is to count as a mediæval writer—who are familiar to many who are not specially given to mediæval studies. It is a plain straightforward tale, about which there is little difficulty or controversy, and it is so constantly connected with the history of our own country as to have special attractions for the English student. The German career of Charles holds a very different position. One or two facts in it, at least the names of one or two great battles, are familiar to the whole world. Every one can point the moral how the rash and proud Duke was overthrown by the despised Switzer at Granson, at Morat, and at Nancy. But the real character and causes of the war are, for the most part, completely unknown or utterly misrepresented. In fact, no part of

history is more thoroughly perplexing than this: the original sources are endless; the inferences made from them by later writers are utterly contradictory; and neither the original sources nor their modern commentators are at all familiar to English students in general. We think then that we shall be doing our readers more service if we pass lightly over the earlier and better known years of Charles's history, and give as much space as we can to the perplexing story of his relations towards Switzerland, Austria, and the Empire.

Each of the two positions which were held by Charles assumes special importance in one of the two great divisions of his career. He succeeded to the ducal crown in 1467; but his practical reign may be dated from a point at least two years earlier, when the old age and sickness of Philip threw the chief management of affairs into his hands. What we have called his French career lasts from this point till 1472. In these years, both before and after the death of his father, he appears mainly as a French prince. His main policy is to maintain and increase that predominance in French politics which had been gained by his father. During this period, with the single exception of his wars with Lüttich, his field of action lies almost wholly within the kingdom of France; and Lüttich, though it lay within the Empire, had at this time a closer practical connexion with France than with Germany. Charles's chief French dominions were the duchy of Burgundy and the counties of Artois and Flanders, the last being strictly a French fief, though circumstances have always tended to unite that province, together with some of its neighbours, into a system of their own, distinct alike from France and from Germany. There was also that fluctuating territory in Picardy, the towns on the Somme, so often pledged, recovered, ceded, and conquered within the space of so few years. These possessions made Charles the most powerful of French princes, to say nothing of the fiefs beyond the kingdom which helped to make him well

nigh the most powerful of European princes. As a French prince, he joined with other French princes to put limits on the power of the crown, and to divide the kingdom into great feudal holdings, as nearly independent as might be of the common overlord. As a French prince, he played his part in the War of the Public Weal, and insisted, as a main object of his policy, on the establishment of the King's brother as an all but independent Duke of Normandy. The object of Lewis was to make France a compact monarchy; the object of Charles and his fellows was to keep France as nearly as might be in the same state as Germany. But, when the other French princes had been gradually conquered, won over, or got rid of in some way or other, by the crafty policy of Lewis, Charles remained no longer the chief of a coalition of French princes, but the personal rival, the deadly enemy, of the French King.

In the second part of his life his objects were wholly different. His looks were now turned eastward and southward, or, if they were turned westward, it was with quite different aims from those with which he went forth to fight at Montlhéry. His object now was, not to gain a paramount influence within the kingdom of France, not to weaken the French monarchy, in the character of one of its vassals, but to throw it into the shade, to dismember, perhaps to conquer it, in the character of a foreign sovereign. For this end probably, more than for any other, Charles sought to be King of the Romans, King of Burgundy, King of England. For this end he strove to gather together province after province, so as to form his scattered territories into a kingdom greater than that of France, a kingdom external and antagonistic to France. As he had found that the French monarchy was too strong for him in his character of a French vassal, he would no longer be a Frenchman at all. To curb and weaken the now hostile and foreign realm, he would form a state which should altogether hem it in from the North Sea to the Mediter-

ranean. That is to say, he would call again into being that Middle kingdom, call it Burgundy or Lorraine* as we will, which he had a better chance of calling into being than any man before or since. And undoubtedly it would have been for the permanent interest of Europe if he had succeeded in his attempt. It would be one of the greatest of political blessings if a Duke or King of Burgundy or Lorraine could suddenly appear now.† A strong independent power standing in the gap between France and Germany ‡ would release the world from many difficulties, and would insure the world against many dangers. It would in fact accomplish, in a much more thorough-going way, the objects which modern statesmen have tried to accomplish by guaranteeing the neutrality of the smaller states on the same border. How vain such guaranties are the experience of the last few years has taught us. But the kingdom which Charles dreamed of, had it been held together long enough to acquire any consistency, would have needed no guaranty, but would have stood by its own strength. Such a state would indeed have had two great points of weakness, its enormous extent of frontier § and the heterogeneous character of its population. But German and Italian neighbours would hardly have been more dangerous to Burgundy than they have been to France, and such a Burgundy would have been far better

* Charles, of course, aimed at restoring a kingdom of *Burgundy*, not of *Lorraine*; but the extent of the dominions which he either actually possessed, or is believed to have aimed at, would answer very nearly to the ancient kingdom of Lorraine, while it would far surpass the extent of any of the successive kingdoms of Burgundy, of none of which did the Netherlands form any part. In fact, the county of Burgundy is the only ground common to Charles's actual dominions and to the later Burgundian kingdom. His dominions in Picardy and Elsass lay beyond the limits of either Burgundy or Lorraine in any sense.

† [In 1871 such a power would come too late, but it might have been useful in 1870.]

‡ "Ut, inter Germanos Francosque medius imperans, utrisque terrorem incuteret."—Heuter, lib. v. c. 11.

§ On this point see Johannes von Müller, b. iv. c. 8, note 469. [The extent of frontier would not have been greater than that of Prussia up to 1866: but this argument might be used in two opposite ways.] [1871.]

able to resist the aggressions of France than Germany and Italy have been.* The population would certainly have been made up of very discordant elements, but they would have been less discordant than the elements to be found in the modern "empire" of Austria, and they would have had a common interest in a way in which the subjects of Austria have not. Perhaps indeed a common government and a common interest might in course of time have fused them together as closely as the equally discordant elements in modern Switzerland have been fused together. Anyhow the great dream of Charles, the formation of a barrier power between France and Germany, is one which, if it only could be carried out, would be most desirable for Europe to have carried out. Statesmen of a much later age than Charles the Bold have dreamed of the kingdom of Burgundy as the needful counterpoise to the power of France. But though the creation of such a state would be highly desirable now, it does not follow that it was desirable then, still less does it follow that any prince or people of those days could be expected to see that it was desirable. With the map of Europe now before us, it seems madness in Switzerland, or in any other small and independent state, to league itself with France and Austria to destroy a Duke of Burgundy. That is to say, it is very easy to be a Promêtheus after the fact. But neither princes nor commonwealths can be expected to look on so many centuries before them. Austria was in those days the least threatening of all powers. Its sovereigns were small German dukes, who had much ado to keep their own small dominions together. In fact, the Duke of Austria with whom we have to do was only a titular Duke of Austria; his capital was not Vienna, but Innsbruck; his dominions consisted of the county of Tyrol and the Swabian and Alsatian lordships of his house. And it would have been only by a miraculous foresight of which history gives few examples that a citizen of Switzerland or of any other

* [In 1864 I did not foresee 1870.] [1871.]

country could have perceived that France was a power more really dangerous to the liberties of Europe than Burgundy was. Lewis seemed to have quite enough to do to maintain his power in his own kingdom, while Charles seemed to ride through the whole world, going forth conquering and to conquer. In this case, as in all others, we must try to throw ourselves into the position of the times, and not to judge of everything according to the notions of our own age. The warning is important, because by some writers,* though not very conspicuously by Mr. Kirk, it is made part of the case against the Confederates that they helped to destroy a power which was really useful to them as a check upon France. This, as we have said, is perfectly true in a modern European point of view; but the Swiss of the fifteenth century could not see with the eyes of the nineteenth century. And, valuable as a kingdom of Burgundy would have been in an European point of view, it is by no means clear that it would have been equally valuable in a Swiss point of view. Indeed, it is hard to see how its existence could have been consistent with the retention of Swiss independence in any shape.

We have thus reached that later portion of Charles's life which brings him mainly into contact with the Empire, both in the person of its head and in those of many of its members. His dealings now lie mainly with Lorraine and Savoy, with Köln, Elsass, and Austria, with the Old League of High Germany, and with Cæsar Augustus himself. His relations to his Imperial overlord were such as might be looked for when he had to deal with a prince who lived politically from hand to mouth, like the Emperor Frederick the Third. The Confederates were at one moment ordered, at another moment they were forbidden, on their allegiance as members of the Empire, to march against a prince who

* As, for instance, in the notes of De la Harpe in the French translation of Müller's History of Switzerland.

was at one moment proclaimed as the chief enemy of the German nation, and who at another moment seemed marked out as the destined chief of Germany and the Empire. The unwise and dishonourable policy which Charles followed with regard to the marriage of his daughter is one main feature of this period. The hand of Mary of Burgundy was promised in succession to every prince whom such a promise might make useful for a moment, and seemingly without any serious purpose of ever really bestowing it on any of them. But it was towards the formation of the Middle Kingdom that everything tended throughout Charles's later years. That kingdom would no doubt have been, in Charles's hands, directly designed as a rival and an enemy to France. Its relations towards Germany were less certain. There is little doubt that Charles at one time aimed at the Imperial crown; there is no doubt at all as to his expectations of receiving a crown of some sort or other from the hands of the Emperor. Among the many striking and awful pictures which the history of Charles contains, among heavy blows dealt and heavy blows received, the tale is relieved by at least two remarkable touches of the ludicrous. We can hardly help laughing over the field of Montlhéry, over the two hosts, each of which fancied itself beaten, and over the tall thistles which bore so terrible a likeness to hostile spears. We laugh still more heartily when Charles has got everything ready for his coronation at Trier, and when the Lord of the World suddenly decamps in the night, leaving the expectant king of Burgundy, or Lorraine, or whatever his kingdom was to be, to go back a mere duke as he came. One thing however is shown by the willingness of Charles to accept a crown at the hands of the Emperor. A crown so received could only have been a vassal crown. A King of Burgundy so crowned, more than the rival of an Emperor in real power, would still have been, in formal rank, the peer only of a King of Bohemia, not of a King of France or England. With such

a vassal crown Charles no doubt hoped some day to unite the Imperial diadem itself. But it is plain that at this stage of his life, vassalage to the Empire was less irksome to Charles's mind than vassalage to France. Indeed, he seems to have quite cast away the thought that he was not only a vassal of France, but by descent a Frenchman. He fell back on his ancestry by the female line, and instead of being French he would rather be Portuguese on the strength of his mother, or English on the strength of his grandmother. In English affairs, we must always remember, Charles constantly took a deep and by no means a disinterested or sentimental interest. By birth a descendant of the house of Lancaster, by marriage a member of the house of York, each English party looked to him in turn as an ally, while he no doubt dreamed that he might one day be called in as more than an ally. And, had not that been an age when the first thing needed in a King of England was to be an Englishman, the claims of Charles, descended as he was from a legitimate daughter of John of Gaunt, might have seemed stronger than those of bastard Beauforts or Tudors. It would indeed have been the highest consummation of Charles's hopes could he have thus won a higher crown than that of Burgundy or Lorraine, and could have gone on once more to attack his old enemy in the new character of a King of England and France. But though there is little doubt that such dreams did flash across his mind, they had no serious results. Charles probably knew England well enough to feel sure that, except in some most strange conjunction of events, a stranger had no chance of the island crown. It was to aggrandizement eastward and southward, to the union of the two detached masses of his dominions by the annexation of Lorraine, that Charles's whole immediate policy looked in his later days. But there can be little doubt that all this had a further aim, that of turning round some day to deal a blow at his Western rival at the head of an irresistible power. Truces might be made and renewed,

but they were merely truces; Charles and Lewis each knew well enough what were the aims of the other. And the wary King of France knew well how to throw the most effectual check in the way of his rival by raising up against him the most terrible of enemies within the limits of the Empire, partly within the ancient bounds of that Burgundian kingdom of which he dreamed.

With Mr. Kirk's way of looking at things it is not wonderful that his treatment of the early part, what we may call the French period, of Charles's career, is better than his treatment of the later, what we may in some sort call its German period. In the latter portion, just as in the former, we have no charge to bring against Mr. Kirk on the ground of research, none on the score of narrative and descriptive power in treating the main events of his history. Still there is a distinct falling-off, both in style and, in a certain sense, in matter. During the later years of Charles the main interest of his story gathers round his relations with the Swiss. And, though Mr. Kirk has probably worked more diligently at the Swiss history and the Swiss archives of that age than any man who is not a native Switzer, still, after all, he does not seem fully to grasp the relations between Charles and the Confederates. And it is certain that it is during this latter part of Mr. Kirk's labours that his way of writing begins to change for the worse. He writes far more distinctly as a partizan, with a strong feeling for Charles and against the Swiss. In this there is nothing specially to quarrel with. English readers are so apt to take up the Swiss side of the quarrel too unreservedly, that it is no bad thing to have the story told, fervidly and vigorously told, from the Burgundian side. But there are signs that there is somewhere a screw loose in Mr. Kirk's treatment of these events. He is evidently less at his ease than before; he is more palpably influenced by the feeling that he has a cause to plead, a case to make out, than in his story of Charles's doings at Montlhéry and Péronne, at Dinant and Lüttich. It is

from the beginning of the second period that Mr. Kirk begins to disfigure his pages with those passages of forced and extravagant rhetoric which are the great blemish of his book, and which thicken through the third volume till we reach the mere ravings with which the history ends.

We have thus reached the great point of controversy, the origin of the famous war between Charles the Bold and the Swiss. The popular conception of this war is simply that Charles, a powerful and encroaching prince, was overthrown in three great battles by the petty commonwealths which he had expected easily to attach to his dominion. Granson and Morat are placed side by side with Morgarten and Sempach. Such a view as this implies complete ignorance of the history; it implies ignorance of the fact that it was the Swiss who made war upon Charles, and not Charles who made war upon the Swiss; it implies ignorance of the fact that Charles's army never set foot on proper Swiss territory at all, that Granson and Morat were at the beginning of the war no part of the possessions of the Confederation. That is to say, the war between Charles and the Swiss, like most other events in history, will always be misunderstood as long as people do not thoroughly master the facts of historical geography. The mere political accident that the country which formed the chief seat of war now forms part of the Swiss Confederation has been with many people enough to determine their estimate of the quarrel. Granson and Morat are in Switzerland; Burgundian troops appeared and were defeated at Granson and Morat; therefore Charles must have been an invader of Switzerland, and the warfare on the Swiss side must have been a warfare of purely defensive heroism. The simple fact that it was only through the result of the Burgundian war that Granson and Morat ever became Swiss territory at once disposes of this line of argument. This is just the sort of simple fact than which nothing can be simpler, but on which the real aspect of whole pages of

history sometimes turns. But it is also just the sort of simple fact which people find so hard really to master and carry about with them. The plain facts of the case are that the Burgundian war was a war declared by Switzerland against Burgundy, not a war declared by Burgundy against Switzerland, and that in the campaigns of Granson and Morat the Duke of Burgundy was simply driving back and avenging Swiss invasions of his own territory and the territory of his allies. A Burgundian victory at Morat would no doubt have been followed by a Burgundian invasion of Switzerland; but, as the Swiss were victorious at Morat, no Burgundian invasion of Switzerland took place. Mr. Kirk, we need hardly say, knows all this as well as any man. He is the last of all men to need teaching that Vaud was not Swiss ground in 1474. He is no doubt doing good service by teaching many people in England and America that it was not so. Thus far he is acting as an useful preacher of historical geography. Yet the lack of a full grasp of historical geography affects his argument even here. I cannot think that he has fully understood the light in which a possible restoration of the Burgundian kingdom must have looked in the eyes of the Old League of High Germany.

How then is the war between Charles and the Swiss commonly looked at? We fancy that to most of those who go a little further into the matter than usual, to those who, without having looked very deeply into details, still have a knowledge of the history somewhat deeper than mere popular talk, the aspect of the war is something of this kind. It is held to have been, though not immediately defensive, yet in every way justifiable in right and in policy; it is held to have been provoked, though not by actual invasion on the part of Charles, yet by various wrongs and insults at the hands of his officers, and by the cruellest oppression inflicted on a neighbouring and allied people. In this view, the Swiss, in beginning the war, simply took the bull by the horns, and attacked a power

which was on the very point of attacking them. The agency of the King of France is too plain to be altogether kept out of sight; but his interference would be held to have been shown simply in fomenting a quarrel which had already arisen, and aiding—after his peculiar fashion—the Confederates in a struggle in which he had the deepest possible interest, but which would have taken place equally had he not existed. Those who are used to look at the matter in this light will certainly be somewhat amazed at the way in which the story is told by Mr. Kirk. In his view—a view not really new, though doubtless new to most of his readers—Charles was wholly in the right, and the Confederates were wholly in the wrong. Charles had no hostile intentions towards the Confederates, but was full of the most friendly dispositions towards them. The mass of the Swiss people had as little wish to quarrel with Charles as Charles had to quarrel with them. The alleged grounds of complaint were either matters with which the Swiss had no concern, or else mere trifles which the Duke would at once have redressed on a frank understanding. The war was wholly the device of Lewis of France, who thought that it would be more convenient to overthrow his great adversary by the arms of the Swiss than by his own. He bribed and cajoled certain citizens of Bern, Nicolas von Diessbach at their head; and they contrived to entangle Bern and the whole Confederation in a war in which they had no national interest. The Swiss patched up a hurried alliance with an old enemy in order to attack an old friend who had neither done nor designed them any wrong. The alleged grounds of provocation given by Charles were utterly frivolous, and if the Confederates had been as anxious for peace as the Duke, an understanding might easily have been come to. The execution of Peter von Hagenbach, above all, was an act of directly illegal violence on the part of the Swiss and their allies. The war against Charles was so far from being defensive that it was utterly unprovoked; it was not even a war of policy;

the Confederates were neither defending their own country nor supporting the rights of an ally. They acted simply as mercenaries, as the "hired bravos" of a power which had corrupted them. The victories of Granson, Morat, and Nancy may be glorious as mere displays of valour, but they were unrighteous triumphs won in a cause in which the victors had no interest; instead of being classed with Sempach and Morgarten, they ought rightly to be classed with the displays of Swiss mercenary valour in later times. The Confederates carried a cruel and desolating war into the dominions of Savoy, a country whose rulers and people had given them no offence; they hunted the Duke of Burgundy to death, and broke the power of his house at a moment when its preservation was a matter of European interest. And all this they did simply in the interest of their paymaster the King of France, who himself, as soon as he had hopelessly involved them in the war, left them to fight their battles for themselves. From that time began the disgraceful system of foreign pensions and mercenary service which permanently degraded the Swiss character and made Swiss valour a mere article of merchandize. The only section of the Confederates to whom any sympathy is due in the matter are those, whether states or individuals, who did their best to hinder the war, and who joined in it only when it became a matter of national duty to give help to those who were already engaged in it. Such among states was Unterwalden; such among individuals was Hadrian von Bubenberg, the defender of Morat. In the war itself and its great victories those who take this line see nothing but successful strokes of brigandage. And in those who brought about the war, in the leading Bernese statesmen, above all in Nicolas von Diessbach, Mr. Kirk sees nothing but traitors of the blackest dye.

We believe that this is a fair exposition of the view which Mr. Kirk now brings, for the first time, as far as we know, before English and American readers. But it is a

view which is far from being unknown in Switzerland itself. It was fully set forth by the late Baron Frederick de Gingins-la-Sarraz, whose papers on the subject will be found reprinted as an appendix to the sixth and seventh volumes of M. Monnard's French translation—not a very accurate translation, by the way—of Johannes von Müller's great History of the Swiss Confederation. De Gingins was perhaps the only example in Europe of his own class. He was essentially a Burgundian of the kingdom of Burgundy. He had deliberately given his life to the study of every phase of Burgundian history, and Charles, duke of one Burgundy, count of another, and would-be king of all, was naturally a character in whom he took a deep interest. Add to this that De Gingins, though he probably cherished no actual wish to be other than the Swiss citizen which modern geography made him, was at heart a Burgundian noble, like his forefathers four hundred years back. He had not forgotten that those forefathers had swelled the armies of Charles, and that their ancestral castle had been burned by the Confederates. A scholar of unwearied research, he worked manfully at this as at all other Burgundian subjects, and he had evidently a special pleasure in bringing forward those facts which tell for the Burgundian and against the Swiss side. Considering how exclusively the story had been hitherto looked upon from the Swiss side, he was, in so doing, doing a service to the cause of truth. Mr. Kirk seems to have dived yet deeper into the same stores, and distinctly with the same bias. But it was to be borne in mind that, novel as his view of the case may seem to an English reader, he is only working in the beat of De Gingins, by whom his main facts and arguments have been already strongly set forth. Our own views have been mainly formed on those set forth by another Swiss scholar, John Caspar Zellweger, the historian of Appenzell, in a most elaborate essay,* followed by a large collection of

* "Versuch die wahren Gründe des burgundischen Krieges aus den Quellen darzustellen und die darüber verbreiteten irrigen Ansichten zu berichtigen."

hitherto unpublished documents, printed in the fifth volume of the *Archiv für schweizerische Geschichte* (Zürich, 1847). It is not for us to guess how many of Mr. Kirk's readers, British or American, are likely to have read Zellweger or De Gingins, or even Johannes von Müller himself. Swiss historical works, both original authorities and modern writers, are not very common in England, and cannot always be got at a moment's notice. And the best authorities for this period consist of documents, documents too, as must always happen in a Confederation of small states, scattered about in all manner of local archives. Each fresh writer brings forth some paper which nobody had seen before, and by its help he crows over the mistakes of those who were unlucky enough to write without having seen it. Zellweger has done a real service by printing his documents at full length, while other writers merely give references which are little better than a mockery, or extracts which make us wish to see the context. But no reader probably would wish us, even if we had the space, to go minutely through every disputed point of detail. We will confine ourselves to setting forth the general conclusions to which we have come, and to pointing out a few considerations which seem to have escaped Mr. Kirk's notice.

First of all, we must bear in mind at every moment the real extent and position of Switzerland at that time. We are accustomed to conceive Switzerland as including Geneva, Basel, and Chur at its different corners, and as being a perfectly independent power, quite distinct from Germany. We are also accustomed to point to Switzerland as the most remarkable example of a country where diversity of blood, language, and religion does not hinder the existence of a common feeling of nationality. We are also accustomed to look upon Switzerland as a power conservative but not aggressive, and on the Swiss as a people who are as ready as of old to defend themselves if attacked, but who have neither the will nor the means to annex any of the territory of their neighbours. Such is the Switzerland

of our own time, but such was not the Switzerland with which Charles the Bold had to deal. In those days the name of Switzerland, as a distinct nation or people, was hardly known. The names *Switenses*, *Switzois*, *Suisses*, were indeed beginning to spread themselves from a single Canton to the whole Confederation; but the formal style of that Confederation was still the "Great (or Old) League of Upper Germany"—perhaps rather of "Upper Swabia."* That League was much smaller than it is now, and it was purely German. It consisted of eight German districts and cities, united, like many other groups of German cities, by a lax federal tie, which tie, while other similar unions have died away, has gradually developed into a perfect federal government, and has extended itself over a large non-German territory. The League then consisted of eight Cantons only—Zürich, Bern, Luzern, Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Zug, and Glarus. All these states were practically independent commonwealths; in theory they were immediate subjects of the Emperor, holding certain large franchises by ancient grant or prescription. Moreover the League was looked on as an eminently advancing, not to say an aggressive, power; it was always extending its borders, always winning new allies and subjects which stood in various relations to the older Cantons. Bern, above all, was always conquering, purchasing, admitting to citizenship, in a way which affords a close parallel to old Rome. The League was feared, hated, or admired by its neighbours according to circumstances; but it was a power which all its neighbours were glad to have as a friend rather than as an enemy. But as yet, with all its advances, the League itself had not set foot on *Welsh*—that is, Romance-speaking—ground. Neufchâtel, Geneva, Vaud, even Freiburg, were not yet members or even allies

* Liga vetus Alemanniæ altæ (Treaty with Charles the Seventh, ap. Zellweger, 75). Domini de Liga Alamaniæ (ibid. 130). Domini de Ligâ magnâ Alamaniæ superioris (ibid. 132). "Allemannia" might either mean Germany in general or Swabia in particular; in either case, "Upper Allemannia" is opposed to the "Lower Union" of the cities on the Rhine.

of the Confederation, though some of them stood in close relations to the particular canton of Bern. All these are points which must be carefully borne in mind, lest the history be misconceived through being looked at through too modern a medium. Above all, the strictly German character of the League, and its close relation to the Empire, must never be allowed to pass out of mind. The German national spirit breathes strongly in all the chronicles which record the great national war between *Dutch* and *Welsh*. Under the former name the Confederate troops are constantly joined with those of Austria and the free cities, in a way which would certainly not be done by any Swiss writer now. As to their relations to the Empire, there is the manifest fact that the Imperial summons is put prominently forward in the Swiss declaration of war against Burgundy. The Confederates make war upon Duke Charles at the bidding of their gracious lord the Emperor of the Romans. Mr. Kirk rather sneers at this, and asks whether the Swiss were on all other occasions equally obedient to the orders of the chief of the Empire. Now we certainly do not believe that mere loyalty to any Emperor, least of all to such an Emperor as Frederick the Third, would have led the Swiss into a war to which they were not prompted by nearer interests. But it does not at all follow that the prominence given to the Imperial summons was mere pretence. The Swiss, like the other members of the Empire, had little scruple in acting against the Emperor when it suited him to do so; still it was a great point to have the Imperial name on their side whenever they could; it gave a formal legitimacy to their doings, and it doubtless really satisfied the consciences of many who might otherwise have hesitated as to the right course. And in truth the relations of the Swiss to the Empire had commonly been very friendly. Certain Emperors and kings of the Austrian house, Frederick himself among them, had indeed been guilty of wrongs against the Confederacy, but that had been in pursuit, not of Imperial but of Austrian interests.

But with Emperors of other lines the League had commonly stood well; the war of Charles the Fourth against Zürich is the only important exception. The great Fredericks,* Henry the Seventh, Lewis of Bavaria, and Sigismund, had always been on the very best terms both with the old Forest Cantons and with the more extended League. There can be no doubt that the name of Cæsar still commanded a deep reverence throughout the cantons, which died away only as the Imperial title sank into little more than one of the elements of greatness in the dangerous house of Austria. It is evident that in the war with Charles, the Swiss, though they certainly never forgot their own interests, sincerely felt that they were fighting for German nationality and for the majesty of that Empire with which German nationality was so closely identified. That the Emperor himself, when he had once stirred them up, disgracefully left them in the lurch proves nothing as to the original feeling; when their blood was once up, they were not likely to turn back for King, Cæsar, or Pontiff.

But feelings of German nationality and of loyalty to the Empire, though they were elements in the case which must not be left out, were certainly not the moving causes of the war between Charles and the Confederates. They might well turn the balance with those who were doubtful, but they were not the things which stirred up men's minds in the first instance. What then was the character of the war? We have seen that it was not a war of the Morgarten type, a war of pure defensive heroism. Was it then, as De Gingins and Mr. Kirk would have us believe, a war of mere brigandage, an ungrateful attack upon an old friend under the influence of the bribes of a concealed enemy? Or shall we, with Zellweger, look upon it as a war which was brought about by the corrupt intrigues of Lewis the

* Of course in their day the extended League did not exist. But the three original cantons were doubtless already bound together by that traditional tie which later written engagements only confirmed; and the Swabians of those cantons were among the most devoted supporters of the Swabian Cæsars.

Eleventh with Nicolas von Diessbach, a war in which the Confederates generally were taken in by these crafty men, but one in which they themselves could not be fairly looked upon as wanton aggressors?

This last view is one which seems to us to come much nearer to the truth than Mr. Kirk's; indeed, we are disposed to go a little further on behalf of the Confederates than Zellweger seemed disposed to do. It seems to us that the war was no more a war of mere brigandage than it was a war of pure defensive heroism. It was rather, like most other wars, a war of policy—whether of good or of bad policy is another question—a war which had something to be said for it and something to be said against it, a war which an honest man might advocate and which an honest man might oppose. It seems to us, like most other wars, to have had its origin in a combination of causes, none of which alone would have brought it about. The Swiss, as a body, were taken in; they were made the tool or plaything—the *Spielball*, as Zellweger expressively calls it—of the contending powers and of crafty and dishonest men among themselves. They were forsaken alike by the Emperor who summoned them to the field on their allegiance to the Empire, and by the king whose policy and whose gold were undoubtedly among the chief determining causes of the war. We say among the chief determining causes, not the determining cause. We clearly see the hand of Lewis throughout the matter, and we believe that without his interference the war would most likely never have broken out. It is certain that the Confederation had no immediate interest in the war. There can be no doubt that territorial conquest was from the beginning one main object in the eyes of Bern, and that in the later stages of the war a mere eagerness for booty began gradually to mingle itself with other motives. It is certain that large sums were paid by Lewis to many leading men in Switzerland, especially at Bern and Luzern; and it is certain that from this time the baneful practice of mercenary service took

a far wider developement, and the yet more baneful system of pensions and of military capitulations with the states themselves took its first beginning. It is hardly less certain that of the men who took the gold of Lewis, some at least took it as a bribe in the strictest sense, and were simply dishonest traitors, sold to the service of a foreign prince. At their head we have as little hesitation as Mr. Kirk in placing the name of Nicolas von Diessbach. In so doing we are only following in the steps of Zellweger, and repeating a sentence which was before him pronounced by De la Harpe. All this we readily admit; but it does not follow that the war was a war of pure brigandage. It was a war very much like all other wars, except those few heroic struggles in which men have simply fought to deliver their country from an unprovoked invasion. Such a war, even if, after weighing the arguments on both sides, we pronounce it to have been unjust, is quite a different thing from a war of pure brigandage. Our Russian war fourteen years back* was thoroughly needless and thoroughly unjust, a war waged in a bad cause against a people who had not wronged us; but there was quite enough to be said on its behalf to take it out of the class of wars of pure brigandage. And the Swiss had in the Burgundian war, not indeed a case like their own case at Morgarten and Sempach, but a better case than England, France, and Sardinia had in the Russian war. As for particular acts of cruelty, those may be found on both sides, and there is nothing to excuse them on either side except the ferocious customs of the age, customs far more ferocious than the customs of some centuries earlier. Swiss cruelty at Orbe and Estavayer was as blameworthy as Burgundian cruelty at Dinant, Lüttich, and Granson. That it was more blameworthy we cannot see.

That there was a weak side to the Swiss cause is plain, if only from the witness of their own historians. The most important sources for this period are undoubtedly the documents which have been worked with such good results

* [1865.]

both by Zellweger and by Mr. Kirk. But the chroniclers are in some sort better indexes of what was in men's minds at the time. One most important authority, and one most strongly anti-Burgundian in its spirit, is the Chronicle of Diebold Schilling of Bern.* Now throughout his story there reigns a sort of uncomfortable, artificial, apologetic, tone, as if the writer was trying, by dint of using the strongest epithets and putting everything in the strongest way, to justify in the eyes of his readers a course that he himself knew could not be fully justified. No contrast can be greater than between Diebold Schilling and Mr. Kirk's favourite author, Valerius Anshelm. Anshelm wrote just after the Reformation, full of all the zeal which awakened that political and moral reformation which was a temporary result of the religious change.† His righteous soul is thoroughly vexed by the unlawful deeds of his own generation and of the generation before him. He declaims against the foreign pensions and everything that has to do with them, with the fervour, the sarcasm, and somewhat of the parabolic vein, of a Hebrew prophet. Lewis the Eleventh, whom Diebold Schilling is rather inclined to worship, is painted by Anshelm in the blackest colours.‡ To be sure he paints Charles of Burgundy in colours

* This chronicle has long been known. It must not be confounded with the contemporary chronicle of the other Diebold Schilling of Luzern, which was printed only a few years back, and which is much less full.

† Not, I would say, as far as I can see, the result of the peculiar dogmas of the Reformation, but of that moral elevation and purification which must always accompany any great and sincere change in religion. Zwingli undoubtedly wrought a wonderful moral reformation at Zürich; but Saint Charles Borromeo wrought an equally wonderful moral reformation at Luzern. In neither case do I believe the reformation to have been the result of those dogmas on which those two good men spoke different languages, but rather of those on which they spoke the same. And neither theological system proved itself capable of setting up an earthly paradise for more than a short time.

‡ See vol. i. p. 100 of his 'Berner Chronik.' The great point is the contrast between Lewis—"der eigensinnig, listig, frevel Delfin" and his father—"von sinem milden, gütigen und wysen Vater, Küng Karl, dem Sibenten." But he gets just as eloquent over his comparison between Charles the Bold and his father Philip the Good: Lewis and Charles alike are compared to Turkish tyrants.

equally black, and throughout his narrative of the time two feelings seem to contend, a natural sympathy for the military prowess of his countrymen, and a profound conviction of the evils which followed on once touching the gold of France. But, like most rebukers of the vices of their time, Anshelm's righteous zeal, as Zellweger thinks it needful to warn us, sometimes carries him beyond the mark. We have to strike the balance between ancient partizans of two opposite sides as well as between their modern followers.

In striking this balance there are some points which Mr. Kirk can hardly be said to keep steadily enough before him. He insists on the facts that Charles had no hostile intentions against the Confederation, and that it was very hard to make the members of the Confederation agree to the war against him, except those greater and more ambitious states which lay nearest to the frontier, and which were most open to the agency of France. Now let us think for a moment what the interest of the Confederation really was. To us, looking calmly at the matter from our distance of time, the overthrow of Charles, the aggrandizement of Lewis, the blighting of the best hope which had ever appeared for the formation of a strong Middle Kingdom, seem a great and lasting European calamity. But it is not fair to expect the Swiss of those days to look so many hundred years forwards and so many hundred years backwards. Putting such distant views out of sight, and putting also out of sight for a moment the question of French influence in the business, had the Old League of Upper Germany any good reason for making war upon the Duke of Burgundy? It seems to us that they had as good grounds for war as nations commonly have for wars which are not purely defensive; but it also seems to us that the quarrels which formed the ostensible *casus belli* could easily have been made up by a frank understanding between the parties, if it had not been the interest of other powers to keep their differences alive.

There is no reason to believe that Charles had any

immediate intention of attacking the Swiss. Indeed, whatever were his ultimate intentions, it was clearly his interest to keep on good terms with them while he was carrying on his other conquests. It is also clear that the great mass of the Confederates had no sort of wish to quarrel with Charles. His father Philip had been an old friend and a good neighbour; and, whatever we say of Hagenbach, Charles personally had certainly done the Confederates no direct wrong. But it does not follow from this that peace was the best policy, or that the war was without excuse. Two questions have to be asked:—First, was the general position of Charles really threatening to the Confederates, so as to make it good policy to attack him while he could still be attacked in concert with powerful allies, instead of waiting merely to be devoured the last? Secondly, were there any particular acts on the part of Charles which, apart from these more distant considerations, rendered immediate hostilities justifiable?

On the former ground the advocates of war could make out at least a very plausible case. Charles was, by various means, annexing province after province, in a way which pointed to settled schemes of annexation which put all his neighbours in jeopardy. He had annexed Gelders, he had annexed Elsass; he was clearly aiming at uniting his scattered dominions by the annexation of Lorraine; he was besieging the German town of Neuss, in a quarrel with which he had not the least concern, in a dispute about the rightful possession of the archbishopric of Köln*—a question surely to be judged at the tribunal of the Emperor or the Pope, and not to be decided by the arms of the Duke of Burgundy. All these were facts known to all the world.

* Charles's policy with regard to the see of Köln seems to be the same as his earlier policy towards Lüttich. As he could hardly annex the bishopric to his dominions, his object was to convert the ecclesiastical sovereign into his instrument. Charles, however, is said to have meditated the annexation by Imperial authority of the four great ecclesiastical principalities which intersected his dominions in the Netherlands—the bishoprics of Utrecht, Lüttich, Cambray, and Tournay.—Heuter, lib. v. c. 8.

All the world knew also how Charles had, in 1473, gone to Trier, to be raised by the Emperor to the rank of king of some kingdom or other, and how he had been left to pack up his newly-made crown and sceptre and go home again. More lately there had been rumours, true or false, that the restoration of the kingdom was again designed, that Charles was to be Imperial Vicar throughout the old Burgundy, that the free Imperial city of Besançon was to become his capital, that he was negotiating with good King Réné for the cession or inheritance of Provence. All these things were enough to frighten anybody, especially those who dwelt within the limits which would naturally be assigned to the revived kingdom. Even among the original cantons, Schwyz and Uri indeed lay without the borders of Burgundy in any meaning of the name, yet among the endless fluctuations of those borders, Unterwalden had sometimes been counted to lie within the Lesser Burgundian duchy. And Bern and her allies of Solothurn and Freiburg all stood on undoubted Burgundian soil, and they were far from being forgetful of the fact.* The re-establishment of the Burgundian kingdom would thus, if it did not altogether destroy the Confederation, at least dismember it; it would despoil it of its greatest city, and give the eastern cantons a powerful foreign king, instead of one of their own Confederates, as their western neighbour. Any serious prospect of such a change was enough to alarm the whole Confederacy; the least hint of

* "Als Krone im Burgundenreich,
Als freier Städte Krone,
Als reiner Spiegel, der zugleich
Ganz mal und mackel ohne:
Wird Bern gerühmt all überall
Von Jungen wie von Greisen,
Auch muss den grossen Heldensal
Das ganze Teutschland preisen."

Lied über Gugler, 1376, in Rochholz's *Eidgenössische Lieder-Chronik* (Bern, 1842). It is much to be regretted that the compiler of this collection should have modernized the language of the old songs in the way that he has done.

the possibility of such a change was surely enough to alarm Bern. This is a feeling which Mr. Kirk does not enter into so much as an historian would to whom historical geography was more of a living thing. But there can be no doubt that the fear existed at the time, and that it was far from being an unnatural fear. Bern then, more directly threatened and better versed than her sisters in the general politics of the world, naturally took the lead in the movement. That the older cantons lagged behind is nothing wonderful: Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden were far less directly threatened, and their position and manner of life naturally hindered them from keeping so keen an eye on the general politics of the world as the astute and polished statesmen of Bern. That Bern therefore was eager for war, while the other cantons somewhat unwilllingy followed her lead, was just what the circumstances of the case would naturally lead us to expect. The alliance with Austria was a necessary part of any scheme of hostility against Burgundy. It of course offended all Swiss traditional sentiment. Austria had up to this moment always been their enemy, while Burgundy had long been their friend, and had only ceased to be so under Austrian influence. But such a feeling was purely sentimental. If Burgundy was really dangerous, Austria was a natural ally. Sigismund, far too weak to do the Swiss any mischief by himself, was yet strong enough to give them valuable help against a common enemy.

The case, in fact, is one in which what we may call the policy of the moment agreed with the permanent policy of Europe, while what we may call the policy of the age, the policy which it needs a long-sighted statesman to reach and which the most long-sighted of statesmen seldom get beyond, suggested another course. The smaller and more remote cantons, those which lay further from the scene of action and which knew less of the general politics of the world, those which had no hope of that territorial aggrandizement which the war opened to Bern and Freiburg,

naturally shrank from attacking a prince who had not directly attacked them. This short-sighted policy accidentally agrees with our judgement four hundred years after that the overthrow of Charles and his power has proved a great European evil. But, at the time, a more long-sighted policy might argue that the part of wisdom was to meet the blow before it came, and, as Charles had given real provocation, not to wait till provocation grew into invasion. The particular grievances alleged against Burgundy were grievances of that kind which can be easily got over when both parties are so disposed, but which easily lead to war when the mind of either side is exasperated on other grounds. That the Swiss had real grievances cannot be denied: their merchants had been seized, the Bernese territory had been violated, their allies of Mühlhausen had been attacked. We cannot doubt that Peter von Hagenbach had used violent and insulting language towards the Confederates. But, except the attack on Mühlhausen, none of these were Charles's own acts. For the affair of Mühlhausen he had an excuse which might seem just to himself, though it hardly would seem so to the Confederates; for the acts of Hagenbach and others he was quite ready to make reasonable atonement. But it was not the interest of France, it was not the interest of Bern, it was perhaps not the more remote interest of the whole League, that such atonement should be accepted. A little friendly mediation might no doubt have easily brought both sides to a momentary good understanding. The question was whether such a momentary good understanding was in harmony with sound policy. And in weighing what was sound policy at the time, it is not reasonable to expect men to look forward for four or five hundred years.

As for Hagenbach, we freely grant to Mr. Kirk that his execution was a breach of the law of nations. Whatever were his crimes, neither the Duke of Austria, nor the Confederates, nor the Free Cities of the Rhine, had any right to judge him. He was an officer of the Duke of Burgundy,

in a country of which the Duke of Burgundy had a lawful, though only a temporary, possession. His deeds, if left unpunished, might form a *casus belli* against his master; we might be inclined to shut our eyes if he had perished in a popular tumult; but his solemn judicial trial was a mere mockery of justice. But it is quite in vain that Mr. Kirk attempts to whitewash the man himself. His resolute and Christian end, acknowledged by his bitterest enemies,* proves very little. Men often die well who have lived ill. And Hagenbach at least knew that he was dying by an unjust sentence. But the genuine and bitter hatred of all the Alsatian and Swabian towns could not have been aroused for nothing. The whole people of Breisach were not in the pay of King Lewis, nor had they all been led astray by the eloquence of Nicolas von Diessbach. The fact is plain; they revolted against a cruel, lustful, and insolent ruler. The particular stories in Königshoven † and elsewhere may perhaps be lies, or at any rate exaggerations; but even slander commonly shows some regard to probability. The real deeds of Hagenbach must have been very bad before men could invent such stories about him. The particular grounds of indignation were just those which do most stir up men's indignation, namely, lustful excess combined with violence and insult. It is quite in vain for Mr. Kirk to soften down the stories of Hagenbach into his being merely "a man of immoral life." People do not rise up against mere immorality in a ruler; it sometimes even makes a ruler more popular. Philip the Good, Sigismund of Austria, Edward of England, the pious King of France himself, were all men of immoral life, but we do not find that anybody revolted against them on that account.‡ But then, whatever were their moral offences,

* See Schilling of Luzern, p. 65.

† Die Alteste Teutsche so wol allgemeine als insonderheit Elsassische und Strassburgische Chronicke, von Jacob von Königshoven, Priestern in Strassburg. (Strassburg, 1698.)

‡ Unless indeed we accept that version of the quarrel between Warwick and Edward which attributes Warwick's bitterness against the King to an

they at least abstained from those specially galling forms of vice which brought destruction on Peter von Hagenbach and on the victims of the Sicilian vespers.

As we grant to Mr. Kirk the unlawfulness of the execution of Hagenbach, we can also grant to him another point. The decisive moment of the struggle was when Sigismund of Austria reclaimed the lands in Elsass which he had pledged to Charles. We admit that the repayment of the money—the *Pfandschilling*, as the old chroniclers call it—was made in a way not contemplated in the treaty, and that Charles was therefore justified in treating the redemption as null and void. But we think that this admission leaves the main case very much as it stood before. The important point is the zeal with which the various towns helped to raise the money, and their eagerness to have Sigismund for their master or neighbour rather than Charles. Mr. Kirk tells us—and we are ready to believe it—that the Burgundian government was stricter and more regular than the Austrian, and that the towns simply stood out for franchises which were inconsistent with the general good. So possibly they were, but it would have been hard to make the citizens of those towns think so. At any rate we may be quite sure that men did not mingle their political cries with their Easter hymns without some good reason.*

We hold then that, taking all these things together,—the generally dangerous designs of Charles, the particular wrongs done by Hagenbach and others, the oppression of

insult offered by him to the Earl's daughter or niece. If so, we are approaching the same ground as the tales of Hagenbach. As a general rule, Edward's gallantries seem rather to have made him popular than otherwise.

* The Easter Song of 1474 ran thus:

"Christ ist erstanden, der Landvogt ist gefangen;
Des sollend wir fro syn.
Siegmund soll unser Trost syn, Kyrie eleison.
Wär er nit gefangen, so wär's übel gangen;
Seyd er nun gefangen ist, hilft ihm nüt syn böse List."

J. v. Müller, b. iv. c. vii. note 572. So Schilling of Luzern, p. 66.

neighbouring and friendly commonwealths, the summons to the Confederates in the name of the Emperor,—there was quite enough to explain, perhaps enough to justify, the Swiss declaration of war. And the peculiar position of Bern fully explains and justifies her eagerness and the backwardness of the other cantons. If the career of Charles did not immediately threaten the Confederates, yet it threatened them in the long run, and it had directly touched their allies. German national feeling, and that vague loyalty to the Empire which was by no means without influence, called the Confederates, along with other Germans, to withstand the threatening *Welsh* power against whom Cæsar had summoned all his liegemen. That Cæsar afterwards forsook the liegemen whom he had summoned would count for very little when the die was once cast. These were motives which would appeal to the sentiments of the Confederates in general. They would be met by strong motives on the other side. Mere sluggishness, mere unwillingness to stir without manifest necessity, would count for something. A powerful sentimental feeling would oppose itself to a war with Burgundy, an old friend, undertaken in concert with Austria, the old enemy. There would be the feeling of jealousy on the part of the small cantons against Bern, when Bern was so sure to reap the chief advantages of war. Motives would thus be pretty evenly balanced. In the end the Confederation was hurried, one might almost say cheated, into the war by French intrigue and Bernese diplomacy. All that did happen might possibly have happened, even though the gold and the intrigues of King Lewis had played no important part in the business. But we are far from denying that they did play a very important part. They clinched, as it were, the whole matter. They made that certain which otherwise would have been only possible; they hastened what otherwise might have been delayed; they made a quarrel irreconcileable which otherwise might have been made up, at least for a season. We do not doubt that the finger of

Lewis was to be traced everywhere, at Bern, at Innsbruck, in the Alsatian towns, seizing opportunities, removing difficulties, aggravating what needed to be aggravated and softening what needed to be softened. We do not doubt that the Confederates were made the tool of a policy which few among them understood, except the special agents of Lewis. All that we say is that Lewis's interference was not the sole explanation of the matter; that, though a very important influence, it was only one conspiring influence among several; that the Confederates had at least a plausible case against Charles, and that they might even have acted as they did though Lewis had never been born. So far as they were unduly or unworthily influenced by the tempter, they had their fitting reward; when they were once committed to the struggle with the power of Burgundy, their royal ally forsook them no less basely than their Imperial lord, and the baneful habits brought in by this first handling of French gold remained the shame and curse of the Swiss commonwealths till the stain was wiped out in our own day.

How far then was the Bernese diplomacy corrupt? Was Bern, were its statesmen, simply bought by Lewis? Nicolas von Diessbach most likely sold himself, soul and body, to the French King. But did the whole commonwealth so sell itself? To our thinking, Mr. Kirk does not make enough of allowance for the wide difference between the feelings of those days and the feelings of ours with regard to any taking of money by public men. Our feeling on the subject is undoubtedly a much higher and better one, and it is a safeguard against practices which, even in their most harmless shape, are at least very dangerous. But we must judge men according to the feelings of their own time. Every man who took the King's money was not necessarily acting corruptly. No doubt it would have been nobler to refuse to touch a *sou* of it in any case. The high-minded refusal of Freiburg at the time of the King's first offers reads like some of the noblest stories of the best days of

old Rome. To take the money, whether for a commonwealth or for an individual, was dangerous and degrading; but it was far from being so dangerous or so degrading as the like conduct would be now. We have no right to say that either a commonwealth or an individual was bribed or bought, unless it can be shown that he or they were led by gifts to adopt a line of conduct which their unbought judgements condemned. Diessbach may have been a traitor of this kind; Zellweger demands his condemnation as well as Mr. Kirk, and Bern and Switzerland can afford to give him up. But we must not extend the same harsh measure to every man who grasped a few gold pieces from the royal storehouse. It might be a reward; it might be a subvention; it was not necessarily a bribe, as we now count bribes. We have a feeling nowadays about taking money at all which had no sort of existence in the fifteenth century. In those days men freely took what they could get: judges took presents from suitors and ambassadors took presents from the princes to whom they were sent; sovereigns and their councillors became the pensioners of other sovereigns; kings on their progresses did not scruple to receive purses filled with gold as an earnest of the love of their subjects. To sell one's country for money, to change one's policy for money, was as shameful then as it is now; but simply to take money, either as a help or as a reward, from a richer fellow-worker in the same cause was not thought shameful at all. Kings with their ministers and ambassadors, commonwealths and their leading citizens, freely took money in such cases. Charles spent his money in Switzerland as well as Lewis; Englishmen took the money of Lewis no less readily than Switzers. If Diessbach or any one else took French money in order to beguile his country into a course which, had he not received French money, he would not have counselled, he was a corrupt traitor. But if Diessbach or any one else, believing a war with Burgundy to be just and politic, took French money as a help towards the common cause, or

even as a reward for his services in promoting that cause, the morality of the time did not condemn him. And many of these practices long survived the days of Charles the Bold. The English patriots of the reign of Charles the Second took the money of Lewis the Fourteenth as freely as Aratos in old times took the money of King Ptolemy. But neither Aratos nor Algernon Sidney can fairly be called corrupt; the interest of the patriot was in either case believed to be the same as the interest of the foreign king, and the patriot did not disdain the foreign king's money as help given to the common cause. The subventions publicly granted by Lewis the Eleventh to the several cantons were really of much the same nature as the subsidies in which England not so long ago dealt very largely. In all these cases there is much of danger and temptation in handling the seducing metal, but the mere act is not of itself necessarily corrupt. The worst to be said of the Swiss is that, in a not very scrupulous age, they did not show themselves conspicuously better than other people. The friends of France took the King's money, and the friends of Burgundy took the Duke's; for Charles had his paid partizans also, though he was both less bountiful and less discreet in the business than his rival. In taking foreign money, as in serving as mercenaries, the Swiss simply did like the rest of the world, only various circumstances made these bad habits more conspicuous and more permanent in them than in other nations. The help of France, which took the ugly form of receiving French money, had a great deal to do with fixing the purpose both of Bern and of the other Confederates. And it is pretty clear that, with some particular men, the receiving of French money was simply the receiving of French bribes. But as regards the state, the subsidy need not have been more than a subsidy; to receive French money as a help against the common enemy was not necessarily any more corrupt than to receive the help of French troops. We do not deny the danger of such practices; we

do not deny their evil effects in this particular case, in which they undoubtedly led, as Valerius Anshelm shows, to the political demoralization of Switzerland. These transactions with Lewis were the beginning of these evil practices, practices which seriously lowered the dignity and independence of the Swiss people down to the abolition of the military capitulations by the Constitution of 1848. The beginning of these degrading habits is to be traced to the war of Burgundy; but it is not fair to speak, as De Gingins and Mr. Kirk do, of the war of Burgundy itself as an instance of mercenary service. We believe that in that war the Swiss were neither strictly fighting for their hearths and homes nor yet basely shedding their blood in an alien quarrel. They were fighting in a war of policy, a war into which they had drifted, as the phrase is, through a variety of influences. But we decline to look on French gold and intrigues as the single cause of the war, of which we hold them to have been only one cause among several. We look on the war, like most other wars, as a war of doubtful justice and expediency, a war which had much to be said for it and much to be said against it. We cannot look on it as a war of mere brigandage, or on the Swiss who were engaged in it as mere mercenary butchers.

The Swiss then acted simply like other people, neither better nor worse; only there is a sort of disposition in many minds specially to blame the Swiss if they did not act better than other people. They were republicans, and they ought to have set examples of all the republican virtues. But in truth the Swiss of that age were not theoretical republicans at all. They had the strongest possible attachment to the rights of their own cities and districts, but they had no notion whatever of the rights of man. They had no rhetorical horror of kings, such as appears in some measure among the old Greeks and Romans, and in a form of exaggerated caricature among the French revolutionists. In truth they were subjects of a king; true they had no king but Cæsar, but Cæsar was their king,

though they had contrived to cut down his royal powers to a vanishing point. Again, people often fancy that the Swiss of that day were wholly a people of shepherds and mountaineers, like the Swiss of a hundred and fifty years earlier. They expect to find in every part of the Confederation the supposed simple virtues of the inhabitants of the Forest Cantons. But the refined and skilful statesmen and diplomatists of the Bernese aristocracy were men of quite another mould. They lived in the great world of general politics, and they were neither better nor worse than other people who lived in it. Their standard was doubtless always higher than that of the mere slaves of a court, but we have no right to expect from them an impossible career of heroic virtue; it is enough if they reach the contemporary standard of fairly honest men in other countries.

There are then points in which we cannot unreservedly follow Mr. Kirk, and points in which we think that his way of looking at things is defective. There are also faults of style, which are the more provoking because Mr. Kirk can write thoroughly well whenever he chooses. But we must not be thought to be blind to Mr. Kirk's real and great merits. He is many degrees removed from that class of historians who draw their facts and their inferences alike from their imaginations, who blunder in every detail, and who, when their blunders are pointed out, repeat them in pamphlets or in new editions, as may be convenient. Mr. Kirk belongs to the school of good, honest, hard work. Such faults as he has clearly arise, not from any want of due care in dealing with his immediate subject, but rather from not fully grasping the position of his immediate subject in the general history of the world. On one point especially Mr. Kirk has done really good service; that is, with regard to the character of his own hero. It is, of course, easy for a man whose studies have gathered round one particular person to rate that person somewhat above

his merits, especially if he be one who has commonly been rated below his merits. But it is just as easy to cry out "hero-worship" whenever a man's studies have led him to take a more favourable view of any historical character than has commonly been taken. Mr. Kirk is very far from being an undiscerning panegyrist or apologist of Charles the Bold. But some ingenious hand might doubtless, by carefully bringing forward this passage and carefully leaving out the other, give the impression that he is an undiscerning panegyrist. To us he certainly seems somewhat to overrate Charles, but he does not overrate him more than is almost unavoidable in one to whom Charles must have been for many years the main subject of his thoughts. And the overrating of Charles is undoubtedly a fault on the right side. The novels of Scott have led people in general to see nothing but an embodiment of brute force in a man whose very mixed character is a really instructive study of human nature. It would be an abuse of words to call Charles either a great man or a good man; but there were in his character strong elements both of greatness and goodness. To compare him with a man who soars in all things far above him, we may see in Charles the same inflexible will, the same stern and unbending justice, many of the same personal virtues, which mark the character of William the Great. We may see in him too the same utter indifference to human suffering; but in both it is simple indifference, and never grows into actual delight in oppression. But no man was ever further than Charles from William's political skill; he had no trace of that marvellous power by which William knew how to make every man his instrument, how to adapt the fitting means to every end, how to mark the right time, the right way, the right place, for the accomplishment of every scheme. Hence, lacking the guidance of that master intellect, those very qualities which made William well nigh the master of destiny made Charles only the sport of fortune. His later history is conceived in the

very spirit of Æschylean tragedy. And as far as the part of the Messenger is concerned, one can hardly wish for any improvement in Mr. Kirk's acting. It is then the more pity that he should have failed so thoroughly, failed, so to speak, by his own choice, as he has failed in the part of Chorus.

On the whole then we welcome Mr. Kirk as a worthy accession to the same company as his countrymen Prescott and Motley. The subjects of the three are closely connected. The historian of Philip the Second and the historian of the United Netherlands do, in effect, carry on the story of Charles, his family, and his dominions. Their tale tells how one corner of those dominions rose for a short time to the highest point of European glory, and how the great work of the Middle kingdom, to act as the bulwark of Germany and of Europe against the aggression of the Western kingdom, was thrown on a few of the smallest of the many states whose names served to swell the roll-call of Charles's titles. And when we see other large portions of those states now helping to swell the might of the power which they once held in check, we cannot help wishing, even without throwing ourselves on the other side with all the zeal of Mr. Kirk, that the stout pikes and halberts of Switzerland had never been wielded against one who seemed marked out by destiny as the restorer of the Middle kingdom.

XII.

PRESIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT.

IN planning a political constitution—an employment which always has a slightly ludicrous side to it, but which, in many conditions of a nation, is a sad necessity —the makers of the new machine have to consider the necessary partition of powers under a twofold aspect. They have to decide both as to the number of departments among which authority is to be divided, and as to the hands in which authority of each kind is to be vested. Thus, the British Constitution in its legal theory, the Federal Constitutions of America and Switzerland, and the type of constitution common among the American States, all agree in dividing the powers of government between two Legislative Chambers and an executive power distinct from both. The partition of powers, as far as the number of departments goes, is much the same in all these cases; but the nature of the hands in which power is placed differs widely in the different examples. There is undoubtedly a considerable difference in the amount of power which each of these constitutions gives to its executive; but the difference in the amount of power is less striking than the difference in the nature of the hands in which that power is vested. England entrusts the executive authority to an hereditary King; the United States, and the several States generally, entrust it to an elective President or Governor; the Swiss Confederation entrusts it to an elective Council. America, it is clear, here forms

a mean between Switzerland and England. It agrees with England—that is, with the legal theory of England—in placing the executive power in the hands of a single person, and not in those of a Council; it agrees with Switzerland in making the depository of executive power elective and responsible instead of hereditary and irresponsible. An almost infinite number of cross divisions might be made by comparing any of these constitutions with those which agree with them in some particular points and differ in others. Thus the French constitution of 1791 had an hereditary King, and only a single Chamber; and the present kingdom of Greece, where the Senate was abolished by the last-made constitution, has followed the same model. These constitutions, so far as their executive is single, approach to the English and American type; so far as their executive is hereditary, they approach to the English type as distinguished from the American; but so far as they have only a single Legislative Chamber, they forsake the models of England, America, and federal Switzerland, and approach to the type of constitution common among the Swiss cantons. Almost any number of changes can be rung in this way. We thus see how inadequate any one classification of governments is, if it is sought to apply it to all purposes, and how almost every topic of political disquisition calls for a classification of its own. In the little way that we have gone, we find monarchic and republican constitutions showing marks of likeness or unlikeness to one another, quite independent of their likeness or unlikeness as monarchies and republics. And any questions between aristocracy and democracy have not as yet come in at all. The aristocratic or democratic nature of a constitution depends much more on the constitution of the Legislative Chambers than either on their number or on their relation to the executive. No doubt the purest forms of democracy and of aristocracy, those in which all power is vested in an assembly of the whole people or of the whole privileged class among the

people, would be inconsistent with any of the forms of executive which we have spoken of. But any of these forms could co-exist with what is now generally understood by aristocracy or democracy, namely, an aristocratic or a democratic way of choosing the Legislative Chambers. Of the many possible cross divisions the one which concerns us for the purpose of the present essay is one which arranges constitutions according to the nature of the hands in which the executive power is vested; according, for instance, as that power is placed in the hands of a King, a President, or a Council.

The distinction between an executive President and an executive Council is obvious. Is there, or is there not, some one person to whose sole hands the executive power is committed in such a degree that whatever is done in the executive department is his personal act, while any other persons who may be concerned are merely his agents or advisers? The American President is a President of this kind; every executive act is his act; many things depend wholly on his personal pleasure; other acts of his require the confirmation of the Senate; still the Senate merely confirms, and cannot act of itself; the act is strictly the act of the President. The President has his ministers; but they are strictly *his* ministers, named by him, and dependent on him; they are his advisers and agents, not his colleagues. The position of the Swiss President of the Confederation (*Bundespräsident*), though his title is so similar, is wholly different. He is simply chairman, with the usual powers of a chairman, of the real executive body, the Federal Council (*Bundesrath*). The other members of that Council are his colleagues, not his mere agents or advisers; executive acts are the acts of the Council as a body, not of the President personally, and it is of course possible that a majority of the Council may come to a resolution of which the President does not approve. These two systems may be taken as typical examples. Few republican states have invested a single magistrate with

such large powers as the American President, while few commonwealths have given a nominal chief magistrate so small a degree of power as belongs to the Swiss President. In truth, the Swiss President is not a chief magistrate at all; he is simply chief of a board, which board, in its collective character, acts as chief magistrate. It is not the Federal President personally, but the Federal Council as a body, which answers to the Presidents, Consuls, Doges, and Gonfaloniers of other commonwealths. His title in truth is a misleading one; he is not President of the Confederation, but simply President of the Federal Council.

Between these two extreme types it is easy to imagine several intermediate forms, some coming nearer to the American and some to the Swiss type. Thus the General of the Achaian League, whose position so wonderfully forestalled that of the American President, differed from him in his relation to what may be called his Cabinet, the Council of *dêmiourgoi*. In most matters the General and his Council seem to have acted together, while others came within the distinct competence of the General alone and of the Council alone. But, even where the General and Council acted together, they acted as two distinct authorities in the state; the action of the General in such a case was something between that of the American President asking the confirmation of the Senate to an executive act and that of the Swiss President taking the chair at a meeting of his colleagues. So again, many of the American States have, at different times, assisted or encumbered their chief magistrate with a Council of State. For instance, the Pennsylvanian Constitution of 1776 vested executive power in a President and Council, the President being apparently a mere chairman. This is hardly distinguishable from the Swiss Federal model. The Virginian Constitution of the same year gave its Governor a Privy Council, but allowed him a somewhat more independent position. He was bound, in most cases, to act by the advice of the Privy Council, but this is a different thing

from being a mere chairman of that body. The Swiss cantons again commit the executive power to Councils; there seems to be no canton where the chief magistrate holds the independent position of an American Federal President or an American State Governor. But here too intermediate shades may be seen; in many of the cantons the chief magistrate, like the Federal President, is a mere chairman of the Council, but in others he holds a decidedly higher relative position. His official title, for instance, often forms part of the style of the canton; in the purely democratic Cantons, the Landammann has the great advantage of presiding both in the executive Council and in the *Landesgemeinde* or Assembly of the People; in Inner-Appenzell he even has large constitutional powers to be exercised personally. In fact, in these cases where the executive power belongs to a President and Council, it is easy to conceive every possible shade between the two types. There is manifestly a wide difference between merely presiding in a Council, with a casting-vote in case of necessity, and having to act by the advice of a Council. If, in the latter case, the President retains the sole initiative, his position will come very nearly to that of the President of the United States with regard to the Senate.

Another type of executive, which may in some sort be called intermediate between the Council and the independent President, may be found in such a magistracy as that of the Roman Consuls. Here are two chief magistrates of equal power, whose number at once distinguishes them alike from the Council and from the single President. The Achaian League too, in its earlier days, placed two Generals at the head of the state. The first impression of a modern reader is that such a government must have come to a perpetual dead-lock. Yet it is certain from the Roman history that such was not the ordinary condition of the Roman commonwealth. Interruptions to the regular march of government arose much more commonly from the clashing of the consular and tribunitian power

than from dissensions between the Consuls themselves. But in truth, though the Consuls were the chief magistrates of the commonwealth, it cannot be said that the executive power was vested in them in the same sense in which it is vested in the President of the United States The government of Rome, in the modern sense of the word government, was certainly vested in the Senate. The other magistrates also, though inferior in rank* to the Consuls, were still strictly co-ordinate with them, and were in no sense their agents or delegates. We know so little of the Achaian League during the days of the double generalship that we cannot say from direct evidence how it worked. But the fact that a single General was, after a few years, substituted for two, seems to show that it worked badly.

As a President is, on the one hand, clearly distinguished from a Council, so he is, on the other hand, no less clearly distinguished from a King. This distinction seems almost more obvious than the former one; yet intermediate forms may be seen here also, and to define a King may not be quite so easy as it seems at first sight. What, for instance, was the King of Poland or the Doge of Venice? What were the two Kings of Sparta? The Spartan case may be easily set aside. Sparta was not a case either of regal or of presidential government. The Kings were so far from being Kings in the ordinary sense that they were not even chief magistrates. The real executive was a Council, the College of Ephors. The Kings were hereditary generals and hereditary priests; they were reverenced on account of their divine ancestry, and were placed in a position where an able king might attain to a commanding influence in the state; but their constitutional powers were of the very narrowest kind. The mere title of King proves nothing; it was kept on in other Greek commonwealths

* That is the regular permanent magistracies, all of which were inferior to the consulship. The dictatorship was only an occasional office, and, though Censors were appointed at regular intervals, their office was not a permanent one.

besides Sparta; it was even the style of one of the annual Archons under the democracy of Athens. The two modern cases are more difficult. Venice and Poland, though both had princes, both bore the name of republics, and Venice is universally classed among republican states. Poland is less usually recognized as a republic. This is probably because there is felt to be a contradiction in the notion of a republic under a King, which is not felt in the notion of a republic under a Doge. People do not fully grasp that *Doge* is simply the local form of *Duke*, nor do they fully grasp that other Italian dukes were, in all save a barren precedence, the equals of kings. But the King of Poland and the Duke of Venice were in the beginning as truly sovereign as other kings and other dukes;* only their powers had been gradually cut down to a point which seemed almost to remove them out of the class of princes into that of mere magistrates. But, as having once been really sovereigns, they still kept much of that personal position which distinguishes the prince from the magistrate. The King of Poland especially, though he might not be of royal birth, though he was not in the possession of ordinary royal powers, was still, in personal rank and privilege, looked on as the peer of other kings. The constitutional authority of both princes was far less than that of the American President, but, being elected for life, they enjoyed, like the Spartan Kings, far greater opportunities of obtaining a permanent influence in the state. Other instances might be found elsewhere, as the hereditary Stadholder in the United Provinces, the Lord Protector in England, the First Consul in France. But it may be observed that this ambiguous kind of government has seldom been lasting. Venice and Poland have been the only countries where it could really be called permanent.

* [When I wrote this, I could hardly have taken in that the Venetian Duke began as a magistrate under the Emperor reigning at Constantinople. But the saying is perhaps not far from the truth as regards his position towards the Venetian state. 1886.]

In France and England—we might perhaps add Holland—it has either fallen to pieces or grown into undisguised monarchy.

Setting aside these intermediate cases, and forbearing also to speculate as to the exact nature of kingship, we may say that the main difference between a King and a President is that the President is distinctly responsible to the law, that he may be judged and deposed by a legal process, and that there is nothing about him of that mysterious personal dignity which, in the minds of most people, still hangs about a King. Whether the powers of a President are great or small, he is simply a magistrate, who is to be obeyed within the range of his powers, but who is liable to legal punishment if he outsteps them. This would seem to be the most essential difference between a President and a King. A King, however limited his powers may be, is, in all modern constitutions, personally irresponsible. His command is no justification of any illegal act done by another, but no constitutional monarchy seems to supply any regular means of punishing an illegal act done by the King's own hands. If the King be deposed or set aside in any way, it is clearly by some unusual—not necessarily unjustifiable—stretch of authority on the part of some other power in the state; there is no court before which the King can be arraigned in ordinary process of law. But the President holds office only during good behaviour, and he may be deposed by sentence of a competent court. This responsibility of the President and irresponsibility of the King seems to be the main difference between them. It seems indeed essential that the President should be elective, but this is no necessary point of difference between the President and the King. An elective King is none the less a King, but an hereditary President would have made a most important advance towards exchanging presidentship for royalty. So, though it is essential to kingship that the office should be held for life, this again is no necessary distinction between a King and a President. A republican

President may be elected for life, as the Florentine Gonfalonier was in the latter days of that republic, and as the President of the United States would have been according to the first scheme of Alexander Hamilton. The one real distinction lies in the President's responsibility. The divinity which hedges in a King, and which does not hedge in a President, is something which is of no small practical importance, but it is hardly capable of political definition. This special feeling about a King seems mainly to arise from that vague religious character with which most nations have loved to invest their princes. In most heathen nations a supposed divine descent is held to be essential to the royal office; most Christian nations have supplied an analogous kind of sanctity in the form of an ecclesiastical consecration of the monarch. But even this is not an essential distinction. Some modern kings dispense with any ecclesiastical ceremony; and though no religious character attaches to any modern republican ruler, such has not been the case in all commonwealths. The official sanctity of the Roman Kings clave in no small measure to the republican magistrates among whom their powers were divided; and there is, to say the least, no contradiction in terms in conceiving an ecclesiastical inauguration of a responsible President as well as of an irresponsible King.

We have thus reached our definition of a President. He is a single, elective, responsible, magistrate to whom the chief executive power in a commonwealth is entrusted. His responsibility distinguishes him from a King; his numerical unity distinguishes him from an executive Council. His elective character he shares with the Council; he may share it with the King. Whether he is elected for life or for a term is a point of detail in the particular constitution under which he acts. It may be here remarked that the examples of the several classes which have been chosen have been taken indiscriminately from single commonwealths and from Federations. For in a perfect Federal government, one where the Federal and the State power

are strictly co-ordinate, where the Federal power has direct authority, within its own range, over every citizen, the powers, executive, legislative, and judicial, to be distributed among the Federal authorities will be precisely the same as in a consolidated state. The form of government may be exactly the same in a great confederation as in a single small canton. The peculiar position of a Federal Government, its special duties, relations, and dangers, may suggest one form of legislature or of executive as preferable to another, just as any other circumstances of the commonwealth may do so. But there is nothing in the Federal character of any particular state which directly affects the distribution of the powers of government, or which hinders its constitution from being fairly compared with other constitutions which are not Federal. The President of the Union and the Governor of the State are powers exactly analogous within their several spheres; that they both form part of one greater political system in no way affects their position as the heads of two distinct and parallel political constitutions.

We have compared our President with a King and with a Council, and we have distinguished him from both. But it will at once be felt that the comparison between the President and the constitutional King is not a very practical one. In most limited or constitutional monarchies the person really to be compared with the President is not the King, the legal and apparent head of the state, but another person of whose position as practical head of the state the law in most cases knows nothing. That is to say, it is not the King, but his First Minister, who fills the position which is really analogous to that of the President of a republic. At the same time it may be as well to remark that this is by no means necessarily the case in all constitutional monarchies. It is curious to see how people always assume that "constitutional monarchy" must mean that particular form of it where the royal power is practically vested in the King's ministers. In like manner it is

commonly assumed that "parliamentary government" must mean that particular form of it where Parliament is assisted, guided, or controlled by the same body, a body it may be, as in our own country, wholly unknown to the law. That is to say, by "constitutional monarchy" and "parliamentary government" people understand exclusively that form of government by which all the powers of the King and a large portion of the powers of the Parliament are practically transferred to the body known as a Cabinet or Ministry. This mode of speech puts out of sight those states where the powers of the King are distinctly limited by law, but where, within the limits of his legal powers, he acts according to his personal will. Such is the case with the constitutions both of Sweden and of Norway. Both are constitutional monarchies, both are parliamentary governments; but the device of a Cabinet to guide both King and Parliament till Parliament prefers the guidance of some other Cabinet is unknown to them. The Norwegian constitution is probably the most democratic form of government that ever included an hereditary king as one of its elements. The royal authority is more narrowly limited than in any other kingdom; yet the personal will of a King of Norway counts for more than the personal will of a King of England. That is to say, small as is the degree of authority which the law gives him, he is free to exercise it according to his personal discretion. The constitution binds him to consult his State Council, but it distinctly affirms that the final decision of all matters within the range of his authority rests with himself. He is personally irresponsible; all responsibility rests with his Councillors, but any Councillor who dissents from the royal decision may escape all responsibility by a formal protest against it. Here is a limited monarchy, a constitutional monarchy, but a monarchy in which there is no approach to a Ministry in our sense of the word. King and Parliament have their distinct functions traced out by law; but in case of differences between them, they are brought face to face as opposing powers, in a way

in which an English King and an English Parliament have not been brought face to face for some generations. Here then is a king who clearly may be personally compared with a republican President. He is personally irresponsible; he succeeds by hereditary right and not by election; but his actual functions are as nearly as possible the same as those of a President, and they are quite different from those of an English King. In England it is not the King, but his chief Minister, with whom the President should really be compared.

The theory of cabinet government, of what is commonly called constitutional or parliamentary government, is that the legal functions of the King and a large portion of the legal functions of Parliament are transferred to a body of ministers. These ministers are appointed by the King, but as they must be appointed out of the party which has the upper hand in the House of Commons, they may be said to be indirectly chosen by the House of Commons itself. They exercise the executive functions of the Crown, and they possess a practical initiative in all important points of legislation. If their policy is censured, or even if any important ministerial proposal is rejected, they resign office. They may indeed escape for a season by dissolving Parliament, but if the new House of Commons confirms the adverse vote of its predecessor, there is no hope for them left. At the head of this body stands one minister, the chief of the Cabinet, the leader of one or other House of Parliament, who is really the person to be compared with the President under the other system. Now all this is purely conventional; the law knows nothing of the Ministry as a Ministry; it knows the several ministers as personal holders of certain offices; it knows them as Privy Councillors and as members of one or other House of Parliament; in all these characters, if they come within the reach of the law, the law can deal with them. A Minister who acts illegally in his office, a Privy Councillor who gives the sovereign illegal advice, can be touched by impeachment or other-

wise; his parliamentary conduct, like that of any other member, is cognizable by that House of Parliament to which he belongs. All this is matter of law; but the doctrine of ministerial responsibility, the duty of a Ministry to resign if the House of Commons disapprove of its policy, the duty of the whole Ministry to stand together in Parliament, the consequent duty of a dissentient minister to compromise or conceal his differences with his colleagues or else to resign his office—all these doctrines, familiar as we are with them, are mere customs which have gradually, and some of them very recently, grown up, and of which the law of England knows nothing. The power of the Cabinet has gradually increased during the last hundred years. The names by which the persons actually in power have been called at different times bear witness to their rapid increase in importance. In George the Third's reign people spoke of "Administration;" at the time of the Reform Bill it was "Ministers," or "the Ministry;" it is only quite lately that the word "Government," which once meant Kings, Lords, and Commons, has come to be applied to this extra-legal body. Yet we now habitually speak of "the Government," of "Lord Palmerston's Government," of "Lord Derby's Government," meaning thereby a certain knot of Privy Councillors, of whom it would be impossible to give any legal definition. The expression is so common that people use it without in the least thinking how very modern it is, and how singular is the state of things which it implies. As Lord Macaulay says, the Cabinet seems to have been unknown to writers like De Lolme and Blackstone, who never mentioned it among the powers of the state. It is more important to remark that the existence of the British Cabinet seems to have attracted no attention among the disputants for and against the American Constitution. The opponents of the Constitution objected to the position and powers of the President as being too near an approach to kingship. Hamilton answered them by showing how much greater were the restrictions placed upon the power of the

President than those which were placed upon the power of the King. But neither party seems to have paid any attention to the fact that the President can exercise his smaller powers far more freely than the King can exercise his greater powers. They speak as if the King of Great Britain could act as independently within his own range as the King of Sweden and Norway. They recognize the restrictions imposed by the written law, but they pay no attention to the further restrictions which were even then imposed by the conventional "constitution." This shows how widely the Cabinet system has developed since Hamilton's time, and how complete is the recognition which, without receiving any more legal sanction than before, it has obtained in general opinion and in popular modes of speech. No one now could fail to see the fallacy of comparing a President who acts for himself, or by the advice of ministers chosen by himself personally and dependent on him only, with a King who acts at every step by the advice of ministers who may have been forced upon him in the first instance, and whom he may, at any moment, be called on to dismiss. Every one now would see that the real comparison, for likeness and unlikeness, lies between the two practical leaders of the state under the two systems, though the chiefship of the one is a matter of positive legal enactment, while the chiefship of the other is a matter of unwritten constitutional tradition.

The main distinction between the President of a republic and the First Minister of a constitutional kingdom seems to be this. The President is elected for a definite time, and, except in the case of some definite crime being judicially proved against him, he cannot be constitutionally got rid of before the end of that time. Be his rule never so bad, still, if he does not break the letter of the law, he must be endured till the end of his year or of his four years; be his rule never so good, the country must part with him at the end of his term, or at any rate his further existence in office must be put to the risk of a fresh

election. But the First Minister, holding a purely conventional office, holds it for no fixed term; if his policy be disapproved, a vote of the House of Commons can get rid of him at any moment: if he continues to give satisfaction, he may, without any formal vote about it, be continued in office for the rest of his days. This seems to be the one essential difference between a President and a First Minister; any other differences are not inherent in the nature of the two offices, but depend on the circumstances of particular countries and on the provisions of particular constitutions. It follows that there is an important difference between the position of an English Minister and that of an American President with regard to the national Legislature. The English Minister and all his colleagues in the Cabinet are necessarily members of one or other House of Parliament; they take the lead in its debates, and have the chief management of its business; it is in the House, as members of the House, and not as an external power, that they explain their policy and defend it against objectors. In America, on the other hand, neither the President nor his ministers can be members of either House of Congress. The President indeed, under a representative constitution, can hardly be conceived as being a member of either branch of the legislature. He can communicate with Congress only by formal messages and speeches like a king; he cannot take his place as a member and join in a debate.* But the exclusion of the President's ministers is a mere point of detail in the American Constitution, which might quite well have been otherwise ordered. There is not indeed the same necessity for the President's ministers to be

* [The existing state of things in France (January, 1872)—one can hardly dignify it by the name of constitution—does give us a President who is also a member of the Assembly.

I ought perhaps to have mentioned, though it does not strictly bear on the position of Presidents, that the members of the Swiss Federal Council may attend and speak in either House of the Federal Assembly, but without the right of voting.]

members of the legislature as there is in a constitutional monarchy; but there seems no inherent difficulty in their being so if it should so happen. Accordingly the Constitution of the Confederate States has somewhat relaxed the restriction.* By that constitution no office-holder can be a member of Congress, but Congress is empowered to grant by law to certain great officers a seat in either House, with the right of discussing measures affecting his own department. And in one class of republics it is clear that neither the President nor any officer of the state can be excluded from the legislative body. In a pure democracy, transacting its affairs in a primary assembly, the magistrates, as citizens of the commonwealth, can be no more shut out of the assembly than any other citizens. Thus in the purely democratic Cantons of Switzerland, the chief magistrate, the Landammann, is President alike of the executive council and of the *Landesgemeinde* or general assembly of all citizens of full age. So in the Achaian League, the General, being an Achaian citizen, was necessarily a member of the Federal Assembly, and, being a member of the Assembly and moreover not being its President, he naturally took a place in it exactly answering to that of our Leader of the House. In fact, the constitution of the Achaian Assembly, as a primary assembly, allowed the Achaian General to hold a position much more nearly answering to that of an English First Minister than the representative constitution of the American Congress allows to the American President. A Roman Consul again, as being a Roman citizen, was necessarily a member of the Roman popular Assembly, which he could convoke and preside in at pleasure. And this same rule equally applies to aristocratic commonwealths possessing a primary assembly, one, that is, in which every member

* [I leave the references to American affairs as I wrote them in October, 1864. The Confederate constitution is just as well worth studying as a piece of constitution-making as if the Southern Confederation had lasted.] [1871.]

of the privileged order has a seat by right of birth without any election. Thus the Duke of Venice could not be shut out from the Great Council nor the Spartan Kings from the Assembly of the Spartan citizens. It follows therefore that this peculiarity of the American Constitution, by which all executive officers are excluded from the legislature, is by no means inherent in the nature of Presidential Government. Still less is the mode of election, or any other detail of the American Constitution. The one real and essential difference between a President and a First Minister is that given already, that a President holds a legal position for a definite time, a First Minister holds a conventional position for such a time as the legislature, or one branch of it, may tacitly think fit.

And now for a few words as to the practical working of Presidential Government, especially in its American form, as compared with the working of constitutional monarchy as it is understood among ourselves. In making this comparison we must take care to confine it to the points which really enter into the comparison; for there are many points of difference between the British and American Constitutions which arise wholly from other causes, and which have nothing to do with the difference in the form of the executive. Thus both Houses of Congress are elective, while one House of our Parliament is hereditary.* But in other constitutional monarchies the body answering to our House of Lords is often elective or nominated, and an hereditary chamber in a republic, though not at all likely, is perfectly possible. So again, the peculiar constitution of the American Senate arises from the fact that the American constitution is a Federal constitution, but it has nothing to do with the special form of the American executive. The same constitution of the Senate is, as we see in Switzerland, equally consistent

* [Mainly hereditary, I should have said. We are apt to forget the existence of one class of the immemorial official Witan, alongside of the greater number of the comparatively modern hereditary class. 1886.]

with an executive Council; it would be equally consistent with a Federal monarchy, a form of government as yet untried, but perfectly possible in idea.* But some of the special functions of the Senate, the necessity of its confirmation to certain acts of the President, are, in the nature of the case, derived from the fact that there is a President, and could hardly exist in a state governed by a First Minister.† Again, the fact that the constitution of the American House of Representatives is much more democratic than that of the English House of Commons‡ has nothing whatever to do with the form of the American Executive. A House of Commons chosen by universal suffrage is perfectly consistent with hereditary kingship, and a House chosen by as narrow a body of electors as may be thought good is perfectly consistent with Presidential Government. In fact, it is a mistake to look upon the American constitution as one inherently democratic. The American Federal Constitution is in itself neither aristocratic nor democratic, but it is capable of being either, or any mixture of the two, according to the nature of the State constitutions.§ None of these points

* [It has at last arisen in the German Imperial Constitution of 1871.]

† One can conceive the acts of an hereditary king needing the confirmation of one branch of his legislature, just like the acts of the American President. Such an arrangement would be quite possible in a monarchy where the King, as in Sweden and Norway, acts for himself within the legal limits of his authority; but it can hardly be conceived as existing, or at least as being practically efficient, in a monarchy where the King is in the hands of a ministry.

‡ [1864.]

§ Speaking roughly, we may say that both the House of Representatives and the electors of the President—that is, practically, the President himself—are now chosen by universal suffrage; but the Constitution in no way orders such a mode of election; it is consistent with it, but it is equally consistent with modes of election highly aristocratic. The House of Representatives is to be chosen by those persons who have votes for the most numerous branch of the Legislature of their own State, a provision perfectly consistent with an aristocratic, or even with an oligarchic, constitution of the State Government; and it is well known that, though no State could ever be strictly called aristocratic, yet most of the States at first required a higher or lower property qualification in the electors. Again, the electors of the President in each State are

have any immediate connexion with the fact that the head of the American commonwealth is neither a King nor a Council, but a President. They may influence the practical working of the executive, but they have nothing to do with determining its form. We have now to look only at those differences which arise immediately from the special form of the American executive, again distinguishing those which are inherent in Presidential Government as such from those which arise from special provisions in the American Constitution.

The main differences between the two systems, the main weaknesses, as Englishmen are apt to think them, of the American system, are obvious enough, and they have been set forth by many writers. But most English writers, writing, as they commonly do, with some immediate party aim, have not taken the needful pains to distinguish what is essential in either system from what is incidental; and they have too often used the whole controversy merely as a means of pointing declamations against federalism or democracy or republican government in general. The first difference which immediately flows from the nature of Presidential Government, as distinguished from Cabinet Government, has been already stated. It is this, that the President's office comes to an end at a fixed time, till which time he cannot. save in very exceptional cases, be removed, while the First Minister may be got rid of at once or may be continued indefinitely. What we call "a ministerial crisis" is, under the Presidential system, necessarily brought on at some time fixed beforehand. In England such a "crisis" occurs whenever the ministry is not in harmony with a majority of the House of Commons, and it can hardly happen at any other time. When it does happen, the Minister either resigns or dissolves. The Ministry and the House are thus brought into har-

appointed as the Legislature of each State may determine, which of course is not necessarily by a popular vote. The Legislature of South Carolina always kept the nomination of the electors in its own hands.

mony, either by the formation of a new Ministry in harmony with the House or by the election of a new House in harmony with the Ministry. But in America, if the President and the Congress do not agree, neither party has any means of getting rid of the other. The President cannot dissolve Congress, and he is in no way called on to resign his own office. Thus it is quite possible that the executive and legislative branches may be in state of discord for four years.* On the other hand, a President of whom Congress thoroughly approves, and of whom the country thoroughly approves, may come to the end of his term of office when nothing calls for any change of men or of measures, and, though he may be re-elected, yet his continuance in office is at least jeoparded, and the country is obliged to go through the excitement and turmoil of a presidential election. This disadvantage seems inherent in any sort of Presidential Government. The Confederate constitution gives the President six years instead of four, and makes him ineligible for re-election. The difficulty is in no way avoided by this change. It indeed enables a good President to be kept in office for a longer time, but it also requires a bad President to be endured for a longer time. By forbidding re-election, it escapes certain evils which have been produced by the possibility of re-election, but it does so only at the risk of introducing at least an equal evil. It is possible, and indeed probable, that the Confederate provision may deprive the commonwealth of the services of its best citizen just when they are most wanted. In truth the evil is one inherent in the form of government; it may, by judicious provisions, be made less baneful, but it cannot be got rid of altogether. It is the weak point of Presidential Government, a weak point to be fairly balanced against its strong points and against the weak points of other systems.

* [It will be remembered that this actually happened in the presidency which followed that in which I wrote. 1886.]

This weak point however would not have been so obvious, nor would it have needed to be so much dwelled upon as it has been, if it had not been aggravated rather than diminished by certain provisions in the American Constitution. If the President were elected by Congress, or by some body chosen by or out of Congress, if his ministers were allowed to be members of Congress or to appear and speak in Congress, the evils of the system would be greatly diminished, while the essential principles of Presidential Government would remain untouched. The system of election actually employed, one which most certainly was not contemplated by the founders of the Union, carries the evils of a great party struggle to their extreme point. The founders of the Union doubtless hoped that the election of electors would be a reality, that the primary electors would choose those men to whom they could best confide so great a trust, and that the electors thus chosen would elect independently and fearlessly. There was nothing absurd in such an expectation on the face of it. In some states of society the election of electors seems a perfectly reasonable system. It is the system adopted in the election of the legislature under the highly democratic constitution of Norway. But in Norway there are no political parties answering to those of England or America. In such a country the matters brought before the Storthing must be mainly of two kinds. There may be questions touching the national independence, about which there is only one opinion in the country; there may be questions of practical improvement, not implying political differences, but requiring practical knowledge or acuteness for their decision. A Parliament which has to discharge such functions as these, to decide questions where the only difference is as to means and not as to ends, will most likely be better chosen by an intermediate body of electors. But such an intermediate body becomes a farce in any country where there are strongly marked political parties. Whether it be a Parliament or a President which has to be elected, the only

question asked of the primary candidate will be, "For whom will you vote?" It is clear that, when it comes to this, the popular vote had much better be given directly. The intermediate electors exercise no real choice; their interposition does but serve to prolong the crisis of the election and the time of unsettlement and no-government which it involves. The presidential election, as it is now conducted, is simply a party struggle on the most gigantic scale. The founders of the constitution doubtless hoped that the local question in each State or district would lie, not between this or that candidate for the presidency, but between this or that candidate for the electorship of the President. But experience has shown this to be hopeless when the elector is simply chosen to elect, and has no other duties. As it is, the election of the President is a trial of strength between national parties, intensified because the same personal question, the same choice between two or three candidates, is presented to a whole nation. It is a national election by universal suffrage, in which, after all, the candidate elected may not have a numerical majority* of the nation. This last possibility, whether it be reckoned as a gain or a loss, is the only way in which the existence of an intermediate body has any practical effect on the result of the election.

The gradual falling off which has been often remarked in the character of the American Presidents, so far as it is a fact, is the natural result of the practical mode of election. When each party selects its candidate in large conventions, it is not likely that the best man of the party will be chosen. An inferior man, who is less known, and who therefore has fewer enemies, is found to be a safer card. This is a great evil in itself, and it further tends to prevent really superior men from meddling with public affairs at

* If the majority of the presidential electors are chosen by small majorities in their several States, while the minority are chosen by large majorities, it may well happen that the person who is chosen President may not have a numerical majority of the popular vote. [It has happened since this was written. 1886.]

all. But, after all, the fact must be taken with some modifications, and other causes have contributed to the result besides the mode of election. Great events bring great men to the surface; in quieter times the average is lower, and there is less obvious need for choosing the greatest even of those who are to be had. The history of Rome shows this very plainly. In ordinary times the people chose ordinary Consuls, who very often broke down if any event occurred which required special ability. In most of the later Roman wars, the early campaigns are unsuccessful; an average Consul was sent to discharge duties which needed powers above the average; defeat was therefore the result, till the right man, Scipio or Flamininus or Æmilius Paullus, was sent to retrieve the errors of his predecessors. So, in America, the republic started under the guidance of one of the very first of men, a man to whom but a few parallels are supplied by the whole history of the world. To expect a succession of Washingtons would have been chimerical on the face of it. But it would have been hardly less unreasonable to look for a perpetual supply of Presidents of the stamp of Washington's successors from the elder Adams to the younger. That remarkable succession of able men of different parties was the natural fruit of a great struggle like the War of Independence. In another generation it was not to be expected either that men of equal power should appear in equal abundance, or that they would be equally sure of rising to the highest places if they did appear. The mode of election into which that designed by Washington and Hamilton gradually changed did but aggravate this natural tendency, and made that a certain evil which was otherwise only a probable danger. Yet it needs a good deal of prejudice to refuse to see in late elections the beginnings of better things. Mr. Buchanan, whatever were his actual shortcomings, started from a previous career of much greater promise than most of his recent predecessors. Few Englishmen will be found to approve of all the doings of

Mr. Lincoln, still it is ridiculous to speak of him as the mere drivelling idiot which it suits party prejudice to call him.* And Mr. Lincoln, it should be remembered, was chosen before the crisis, as a mere average President in ordinary times. The choice of General M'Clellan as his opponent was a distinct return to the older and better system. That the South, choosing after the crisis had begun, and with infinitely more at stake than the North, put its best men at its head, is universally allowed. But the constitutional mode of election in the two confederations was exactly the same. He therefore who admires the result of the system in the one case has no right to decry it as irretrievably corrupt in the other.

After all, it may be fairly asked whether the average of the American Presidents is not pretty much on a level with the average of Ministers in the constitutional states of Europe. We must look at their acts, not at their words; we must allow for the natural self-assertion of a people at once young and powerful; we must remember that America has not, like the nations of Europe, the advantage of the discipline provided by constant friendly or hostile intercourse with surrounding neighbours on equal terms. Looking fairly at the case, we must say that really great men are the exception, both in Europe and in America. And there is no more security in the one case than in the other that the greatest man who can be had shall be put at the head of affairs. In any country it is hard to say how much credit is due to the form of government, how much to the personal character of rulers, how much to causes over which Kings, Parliaments, and Presidents have no control. But the American system has at least not been inconsistent with a high degree of peace, freedom, and prosperity. Most people indeed look only at the present

* [The time when this was written, when Mr. Lincoln was a candidate for his second presidency, will be remembered.] [1871.]

[Later elections, specially the last of all, have gone a good way to set aside much that is here said. 1886.]

moment, and think that whatever goes on before their own eyes must needs be greater, for good or for evil, than anything that ever happened before. Such people cry out at the present American war as something horrible beyond all comparison in past history. This feeling is generally mingled with unreasonable abuse of the form of government which is common to both the contending parties. The fact that so large a mass of mankind never before remained for so long a time in the enjoyment of so large a portion at once of peace* and of freedom, as the American people enjoyed in the interval between the War of Independence and the War of Secession, is altogether forgotten. No one will say that this great blessing has been the personal work of the successive Presidents. But at least neither their personal character, nor the system of government under which they were appointed, has proved any hindrance to national prosperity. Few nations, whether monarchies or republics, can say more of so long a succession of rulers.

At the same time it is clear that the mode of presidential election which is now in use in the United States is essentially vicious. A system which was meant to be a check upon party spirit has become its most effectual instrument. It may be hoped that some means may be found for remedying this evil even in the American Union itself; at all events, the warning should not be lost on any future States which may adopt the Presidential system. For surely the Presidential system, with all its faults, is far better, far more honest, far more stable, than those mockeries of ministerial or "responsible" government which are to be seen in our still unemancipated colonies. Our peculiar system, complicated and conventional as it is, works well in England because it is the natural and gradual growth of the circumstances of England. It is a

* Madison's war with England and the later Mexican war—neither of them struggles on any very great scale—are the only serious exceptions to seventy-eight years of peace.

delicate and doubtful task to transfer it to other European kingdoms, but this has, in one or two cases, been successfully done. But in any European kingdom there is some groundwork to go upon. There are older titles, institutions, traditions, which can be dexterously pressed into the service, and can be clothed with new objects and duties. But a conventional system of this kind is the very last thing which ought to be set up in a perfectly new commonwealth which supplies none of the elements which are needed for its success. We do not feel the unreal position of a constitutional King, because the unreality is at once veiled by the traditions of ages, and is fully counterbalanced by its incidental advantages. But the unreality, one might say the absurdity, of a Governor and a "responsible Ministry" in Australia or New Zealand stands out in all its nakedness. A President safe in power for four years or for one year would be an element of stability compared with the ephemeral ministers which supplant one another almost daily. Any new states which adopt the Presidential system will have to consider two main points, the way of electing the President, and the question whether he should or should not be capable of immediate re-election. With regard to the election, the American system as now practised is one extreme, the old ducal elections at Venice were another. The strange mixture of chance and selection, the repeated choosings and drawings, by which the electors of the prince were finally appointed, have in our eyes somewhat of the ludicrous. No one probably would propose a system quite so complicated; still the Venetian mode of election must have shut out the main evils of the American mode. The electors, when at last appointed, may have chosen well or ill, honestly or corruptly, but they really did choose. Utterly unknown as it was beforehand who would finally have to elect, they at least could never have elected at the bidding of a party convention. If the choice were vested in the legislature, or in some committee of it, or in some

class of persons previously existing and not appointed for the special purpose of election, the election would doubtless still be a struggle between two political parties in the state; indeed, within proper limits, it ought to be a struggle between political parties, wherever political parties exist. But, with such modes of election as have just been hinted at, the election of the national chief magistrate would not become a local struggle in every district, and it would run a much fairer chance of being a struggle between parties represented by the best men on each side.

The other question, that of re-election, is, like most other political questions, a balance of evils. The chief reason for allowing re-election has been already stated; if it is forbidden, it may easily happen that the country may be deprived of the services of its best statesman just when they are most wanted. In many of the ancient commonwealths re-election was forbidden; in Achaia the General could not serve for two successive years; at Rome it was at no time lawful for the same man to be Consul for two years together, and at one time it was forbidden for a man who had once been Consul ever to be Consul again. But in those commonwealths there was a constant and not unreasonable dread lest a chief magistrate constantly re-elected should grow into a tyrant. And, where magistrates are annual, to shut a man out for a single year is a different thing from shutting him out for four years or for six. And the extreme case, the law forbidding a Consul to be chosen again after any lapse of time, was found, as might have been looked for, to work badly, and it was therefore repealed. Even the law which forbade two successive consulships was dispensed with when Rome needed the arm of Caius Marius against the Teutonic invader. In the democratic Cantons of Switzerland, the re-election of the Landammann has always been very common, both in past times and in our own day. Sometimes the office, though always filled by annual election, became almost

hereditary in a single family. But in Switzerland there has never been the same fear of tyrants which there was in Greece, and on the other hand it is hardly safe to argue from such very small communities as the democratic cantons to republics of the size of America or even of Achaia. If there are strong arguments for re-eligibility, there are strong arguments against it. And the controversy has somewhat shifted its ground since the days when re-eligibility was defended by Hamilton in the Federalist. Men then professed the old Greek fear, lest a President often re-elected should grow into a tyrant. Experience has shown this fear to be quite groundless, and Jefferson, its chief mouthpiece, lived himself to disprove it in his own person. But other evils have arisen from the practice which Hamilton could hardly foresee. His whole argument presupposes the possibility of a wicked President, but it hardly presupposes the possibility of a weak President. In truth, the smaller man the President is, the greater becomes the evil, not merely of his re-election, but of his re-eligibility. In all cases where re-election is possible, the magistrate in office is placed in the position of a candidate. He is tempted, especially as his term of office draws near to its end, to direct his administration mainly with a view to secure popular favour. It is clear that, the smaller the man in office is, the greater will be the force of this temptation, and the smaller will be the means to which he will resort to secure his re-election. The real evil of re-eligibility did not come out in the days of those great Presidents who were actually re-elected, but in the days of those small Presidents who wished to be re-elected and were not. And now, for the first time since the days of Jackson, there appears a real change of a presidential re-election. And why? Clearly because, however small Mr. Lincoln may seem in our eyes, he does not seem small in the eyes of a vast party of his countrymen. Probably no one puts him on a level with any of the Presidents down to Jackson; but it is just because he is felt to be a

man of a different mould from any of the Presidents since Jackson, that one of the great parties in the commonwealth is prepared to raise him a second time to the head of the state.*

It is undoubtedly true that the possibility of re-election does lay a President under temptation to act in all things with a view to re-election; that it degrades him, in short, from a ruler into a canvasser. With a weak or mediocre President these temptations are greatly increased. They are again so aggravated in America by the present mode of election that, while that mode of election prevails, we may safely say that the arguments against re-eligibility overbalance the arguments for it. Yet, after all, we may ask whether the evil, though undoubtedly far more glaring, is practically very much worse than much that we see at home. It is more glaring, because an English First Minister can never be driven directly to canvass the whole country for votes to keep him in the place of First Minister.† But he does the same thing indirectly. The Minister is tempted, no less than the President, to act in the way by which he may catch most votes, whether that way be the best way or not. If he wishes to keep office, he must, just as much as the President who aims at re-election, keep both the House of Commons and the nation in good humour. The only difference is that our conventional constitution throws a decorous veil over much which in the American system stands out nakedly. The English Minister can often gain a point by dexterous dealing in Parliament about which an American President would have to make an open appeal to the multitude. The homage thus paid to virtue may or may not be a gain, but the inherent vice is the same in

* So now—January, 1872—there seems every chance of the re-election of General Grant.

[Since then the possibility of a *third* presidential term, hitherto deemed impossible, has been at last discussed. 1886.]

† [Something much more like doing so than was heard of in 1864 has come to be usual now. 1886.]

both cases. A President of the Confederate States or a King of Sweden and Norway has in this case the advantage over either. The Confederate President is safe for six years, and cannot be re-elected; the Scandinavian King is safe for life. Either of them can act far more freely according to his own notion of the public interest than is open either to a President of the United States or to an English Minister. Whether it is a gain to allow either King or President so wide a discretion is another matter. Here, as ever, we can only balance the advantages each way. So again the indirect power of deposing the Ministry, which our conventional constitution vests in the House of Commons, leads the House to abdicate many of its functions in favour of the Ministry; it makes the possible fate of a Ministry depend on the decision of questions which should be judged on their own merits; it affords a constant temptation to members to vote this way or that, not because it is the best way, but because it will help to keep in or turn out such a Minister. The American system avoids all this, but it avoids it, to mention no other disadvantages, at the cost of too great an isolation of the executive and legislative branches from one another. And our system, though it tends to divert attention from real practical interests to the maintenance of this or that man in power, certainly does not thereby make party strife in England any more bitter or any less personal than party strife in America.

We have just compared the President with the constitutional King acting at his own discretion within the limits of the law and with the First Minister in constitutional monarchies of another kind. It now only remains to contrast him with the other form of republican executive, the Executive Council, as seen both in the Swiss Confederation and in most of the several Cantons. The Swiss Federal Constitution has several points of likeness with that of America, and the constitution of the two Houses of the Federal Legislature is clearly borrowed from the American

model.* But, in the nature of its Executive, the Swiss Confederation has utterly departed from American precedent, and has produced something at least as widely different from an American President as an American President differs from an European King. In Switzerland the executive power of the Confederation is vested in a Board or Council of seven, as the *Bundesrath* or *Conseil Fédéral*. This Council is elected by the two Houses of the Federal Assembly acting together. he Federal Assembly itself is chosen for three years, and, when it comes together, it chooses an Executive to last as long as itself. The President and Vice-President are chosen yearly by the Assembly from among the members of the Council, and neither of those offices can be held by the same man for two years together. The Council apportions the different departments of state among its own members, but it is expressly declared that this is simply an arrangement of convenience, and that all decisions must issue from the Council as a body. The members of the Council have a right to speak and make proposals in either House of the Federal Legislature, but not to vote.

The first thing that strikes one on considering this system is that it at once hinders the commonwealth from making the most of a great man, and secures the commonwealth from being dragged through the dirt by a small man. The presidency of Washington and the presidency of Pierce are in Switzerland alike impossible. The state has no personal chief; the so-called President of the Confederation is only chairman of a board of seven. He cannot do a single act or make a single nomination by his own personal authority. It is clear that this hampering of individual action may be a great evil in the case of a man of genius checked by inferior colleagues; but it may also be a great good in the case of a presumptuous or

* [I speak of the Federal Constitution as it was fixed in 1848. Important changes are now—December, 1871—January, 1872—under discussion by the Federal Assembly.]

incompetent man rendered harmless by wiser colleagues. America, with her personal chief, runs a risk which Switzerland avoids. As in all cases of risk, the more adventurous state sometimes reaps for itself advantages, and sometimes brings on itself evils, from both of which its less daring fellow is equally cut off. It may be that each system better suits the position of the nation which has adopted it. The people of America, a young, vigorous, expanding people, with a whole continent lying open to them, naturally preferred the energetic lead of a personal head. They took their chance; a bad President could hardly do so much harm as a good President could do good. In Switzerland, on the other hand, a good President could hardly do so much good as a bad President could do harm. Switzerland, though beyond all others a regenerate nation, was still an old nation; she was a small state hemmed in by greater ones; she lay between two of the greatest powers of Europe, two of the bitterest and most persevering enemies of right and freedom. Alike the cradle and the refuge of continental liberty, she needed above all things a system which should preserve everything and jeopard nothing. She seized on a rare and happy moment, when all the despots of Europe had enough to do at home, to reform her constitution without foreign intermeddling. And she formed a system which exactly suits the position of a small, free, conservative, power ready as ever to defend its own, but neither capable nor desirous of aggrandizement at the expense of others. In such a position as that of Switzerland, the first virtue in a government is a certain dignified discretion. The League has to hold its own, and sometimes to hold it with some difficulty. Anything like bravado and anything like servility would be alike out of place. An incompetent chief of the commonwealth might do irretrievable mischief, and a man of genius, unless genius were more than usually tempered by discretion, might do fully as much mischief as a fool or a traitor. It is then in a spirit of the truest wisdom that

Switzerland declines to place herself at the mercy of any single chief. Where moderation and discretion are the virtues most to be prized, a well-chosen Council is better to be trusted than any one man. The wisdom of the Swiss Constitution in this respect has been amply tested by experience. Among all the changes and complications of late years, no government in Europe has displayed a higher degree of practical wisdom than the Federal Council of Switzerland. In every question with foreign powers it has preserved that dignified moderation which best suits the position of the country. In domestic affairs, in the local disputes which still often distract the several Cantons, the action of the Federal power has been invariably such as to command the general respect of the nation. The last event in Swiss history, the late unhappy outrage at Geneva,* has been as honourable to the Federal Council as it has been discreditable to the authorities of the Canton. No despot could have acted with greater energy; no Judge on the bench could have acted with greater impartiality. We can hardly conceive that any single President or succession of Presidents could have guided the Confederation with the like wisdom through all the difficulties of the last sixteen years. A weak President might have cringed ignobly before Prussia or Austria or France; a daring President might have entangled the Confederation in enterprises beyond its strength. The tutelary wisdom of the Federal Council has steered equally clear of both forms of error.

The sort of negative wisdom which the Swiss Government shows, and which is what the position of the country specially needs, is displayed both in the theory and the practice of the Swiss Federal system. The form of Executive which is chosen, and the relations between the executive and legislative branches, avoid most of the positive evils which have been pointed out in other systems. The Council is elective; but its election cannot

* [1864.]

be made the subject of strife throughout the whole land. There is no opportunity for caucuses and conventions where the election is made by the Legislature itself. No doubt the election of the Federal Councillors will always be a party business; no doubt they will always represent the party which has the majority in the Assembly; but they are not themselves the direct creation of a personal struggle carried into every corner of the land. Elected by the Legislature, coming into office along with the Legislature, there is every chance of their acting in harmony with it. Their power of taking a share in the debates of the Assembly at once enables the Assembly to be better informed on public affairs, and also takes away that blot on the American system by which a statesman who is appointed to any executive office is debarred, for the time at the least, from any parliamentary career. Irremoveable by the existing Assembly, with the question of their re-election dependent on an Assembly which is not yet in being, they have less need than either English or American statesmen to adapt their policy to meet any momentary cry. On the other hand, acting always as a board, the Swiss Federal Councillors have not the same opportunities of making themselves known in the world which fall to the executive chiefs of other countries. No Swiss statesman enjoys an European reputation. The Ministers of other powers, even of other minor powers, are often well known. Every one just now is familiar with the names of certain statesmen, not only in Prussia and Austria, but in Denmark and Saxony.* But when the affairs of Neufchâtel, of Savoy, of the Valley of Dappes, drew the eyes of all Europe upon Switzerland, it was not this or that Swiss statesman who was heard of, but the Federal Council as a body. It is hardly needful to point out how exactly contrary this is to the state of things in America. No one in England ever doubts who is Prime Minister; no one in

* [The Saxon statesman of 1864 has since become famous on a wider field.] [1871.]

the United States ever doubts who is President. But even in Switzerland itself very well informed men cannot always say off-hand who is the *Bundespräsident* of the year. This is by no means necessarily a fault; perhaps it is just the state of things which should be in a republic; but it at least strikes any one who is familiar with the personal contests of England and America as a singular peculiarity.

We have thus contrasted Presidential Government with Constitutional Monarchies on the one hand and with Executive Councils on the other. Which system is the best of the three is a question which can admit of no general answer. The great lesson of political history is to learn that no kind of government worthy to be called government is universally good or bad in itself. All forms, Kings, Presidents, Councils, anything in short except mere tyranny and mere anarchy, may be the best, as they may be the worst, in some particular age or country. Of the three great systems which we have been considering, the English, the American, and the Swiss, we may be sure that each is, on the whole, the best suited to the country in which it is found. None of the three countries would gain by exchanging its own system for the system of either of the others. But this does not show that any one of the three may not profitably study the theory and practice of the other two, and find therein either warnings or examples for its own benefit. The Swiss system is, of all the three, the least open to positive objection; but it does not therefore follow that it is better in itself than that of England or of America. Still its success within its own sphere cannot fail to point it out as something worthy of the attention and the admiration of both countries. The American system, as we have seen, is open to objections of the gravest kind, yet there can be little doubt that it will bear transplanting better than either of the other two, and that it is better suited than either of the other two to the circumstances of those new commonwealths which are rising in distant corners of the world. The attempt to transplant

the traditional English system to lands where its historical and social groundwork does not exist has proved a lamentable failure. And for a young, pushing, commonwealth, with the world before it, the dash and enterprise of a well-chosen personal chief will probably be more valuable than the calm defensive wisdom of the Councillors of the Everlasting League. It is the American system, in its most essential features, which forms the natural object for the imitation of other communities of Englishmen beyond the seas. It is for them to seize on the leading principles of the immortal work of Washington and Hamilton, to alter such of its general provisions as experience has shown to be defective, to work in such changes in detail as may be needed by any particular commonwealth. The American Constitution, with its manifest defects, still remains one of the most abiding monuments of human wisdom, and it has received a tribute to its general excellence such as no other political system was ever honoured with. The States which have seceded from its government, the States which look with the bitterest hatred on its actual administrators, have re-enacted it for themselves in all its essential provisions. Nothing but the inveterate blindness of party-spirit can hinder this simple fact from at once stopping the mouths of cavillers. Sneers at republics, at democracies, at federal systems, are, wherever they are found, mere proofs of ignorance and shallowness; but there are no mouths in which they are so utterly inconsistent, so utterly self-condemning, as in the mouths of champions of the Southern Confederation.

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